COMFORTABLE, HONEST AND UNPRETENTIOUS: A CULTURAL HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

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Abstract

The arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement into Canada at the end of the nineteenth century intersected with several interrelated developments. Art, architecture, education, and the process of professionalization, were all affected. Controlled by a close-knit community of cultural leaders, connected through a web of private and public associations, a Canadian Movement was formed, one which helped shape middle-class notions of domestic space and design. This dissertation examines the influence of three architects: Eden Smith in Toronto; Percy Nobbs in Montreal; and Samuel Maclure in Victoria. Together with other artists, architects, and craftspeople, and connected by organizations such as the Ontario Association of Architects, Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, Group of Seven, Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, they laid the groundwork for the Canadian Craft Movement. This dissertation also incorporates interviews with owners of Arts and Crafts homes by Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure, as a means of considering the Movement's Canadian legacy.

This study arrived at three main findings. The first was an affirmation of a Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, separate from its counterparts in Britain and the United States. The second uncovered the roots of the Movement's cultural support network, as it existed primarily (though not exclusively) among Canada's urban, white, male, middle-class, English Canadian, cultural elite. The third, the issue of the Movement's legacy, was affirmed through the fieldwork, supported by archival and other research materials. This dissertation demonstrates that the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was its own development, largely the product of an urban, Anglo-centric, cultural elite, and has survived the last century as a guiding, cultural force.

For Sandra, whose love and patience have graced every page,

to my parents, who have supported me every step of the way,

and to my family and friends, who have come to learn the meaning of the word "soon."

Without your love and support, none of this would have been possible.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge those who have been instrumental in the completion of this dissertation. To my supervisory committee – Marlene Shore, Sean Kheraj, and Malcolm Thurlby – who brought their expertise and guidance to this work, I give my thanks. To my family, who offered their love and support over the years, and to my mother Christine, who eagerly stepped in as an equal parts proof-reader and pep talker, I cannot begin to express my gratitude. Finally, no mention of my own accomplishment and success in this endeavour can be made without recogition of the love, patience, guidance, and support of my partner Sandra. For this, and for so much more along the way, I will be forever thankful.

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Introduction:

The Art and Craft of Living Simply

> The parlor has gone, the upstairs sitting room has almost disappeared, and the dining room is a bit wobbly in the smaller houses of today. We have reached the cottage stage. Why not be comfortable, honest and unpretentious?[1]
>
> – *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, 1930

Appearing in the 1930 folio edition of *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, these few words vividly evoke the spirit of times, the modern evolution of North American domesticity having experienced a revolution in the space of a generation. By the time of publication, the Canadian architectural profession had grown from its modest debut at the end of the nineteenth century into something more formidable, as the rapid growth and intensification of urban Canada created a strong demand for modern housing. In rapidly growing cities including Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria, this new urban domestic reality was most potent, as neighbourhoods and streetcar suburbs sprang up in Rosedale, Westmount, and Oak Bay. The era of the manor house and mansion had come to an end for all but the wealthy, leaving the growing middle class to create and carve out for themselves a domestic solution that adhered to the early twentieth-century values of simple, modern domesticity, paired with architectural restraint. Conceived during an era of significant technological development and social change, amidst the advent of the automobile, moving picture, and machine-gun, not to mention the more domestic, everyday innovations of electricity, central heating, and refrigeration, the antimodernist

[1] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930), 48.

idealism inherent in the traditionalist design philosophy of the Arts and Crafts Movement was born into time of great upheaval.

Begun in Britain under the influence first of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin [1812-1852] and then of William Morris [1834-1896] and his followers, the founders of the British Arts and Crafts Movement sought to create a cultural, artistically-fortified antidote to what they viewed as a plague of modern technological innovation and mechanization which had by the 1860s come to define Victorian Great Britain. In many things art, from painting, to sculpture, to architecture, Morris and his circle strove to return the traditional element of craft, these two elements deemed lost in the scramble towards mass-production, automation, and the resultant deskilling of the labour force. Morris' ideas soon spread to the United States, to be adopted and adapted by individuals such as Gustav Stickley [1858-1942] and Frank Lloyd Wright [1867-1959]. Canada soon followed, the cause of the Arts and Crafts finding its place amid the nation's many cultural innovators and creators. In the realm of architecture, the Movement's traditionalist idealism was reason enough for several among Canada's growing architectural profession to take heed, its nationalistic, protectionist bent, which valued local craftsmanship, local materials, and local architectural talent, able to establish the Arts and Crafts among its newest devotees. Canada still a new nation at the outset of the twentieth century, quickly growing and urbanizing, this maelstrom of shifting socio-political sands and circumstance allowed the emergent Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement to flourish and evolve into its own species.

From a practical standpoint, the traditional material aesthetic of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which favoured natural materials and local craftspeople and architects,

created a product that appeared to have sprung from the ground, thus helping it become a cultural icon of nationalist design. In conjunction with this, the outward spread of streetcar lines, paved roads, electric utility poles, and water mains, radiating from city centres out to the farthest reaches of the urban environment, enabled more and more people to flock to the first streetcar suburbs of Canada, following a larger North American trend that would dominate domestic living patterns for decades.[2] This turn of events facilitated domestic architecture becoming one of the most enduring cultural artifacts of the Arts and Crafts Movement, to be joined by a much larger umbrella of ideals including a highly directed philosophy of design, craftsmanship, and labour. These in turn constituted a set of beliefs that can be said to belong within the realm of antimodernism. The homes of this era, which spanned roughly from the turn of the last century to the beginning of the Second World War, and shared design principles with churches, schools, and university campuses across Canada, came to define much of early twentieth-century life both private and public. Born from a decline in craftspeople, and of the related decline in appreciation for ornate decoration, a cultural shift towards a modern, urban, middle-class ethos had been long in the making. Combined with a growing desire to live well in one's own home, and to retain a sense of identity through design, the time had come, as the editor of *Canadian Homes and Gardens* put it, to take pleasure in living in such a way that was "comfortable, honest and unpretentious."[3]

A study of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, the main goal of this dissertation is to examine the history of Canada's experience with a complex, far-reaching, cultural phenomenon, one which spoke to the many social, political, and

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[2] Sam Bass Warner Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).
[3] Hodgins and MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, 48.

technological challenges to tradition that came to pass during the early twentieth century. Additionally, this study must also deal with the intricacies of early twentieth-century Canadian nationalism and identity. The Craft Movement touched the lives of many Canadian artists, painters, sculptors, writers, craftspeople, and architects, their collective experiences of central importance to this study. This dissertation aims to demonstrate the myriad ways through which a relatively small, interconnected group of Canadian artisans, architects, and cultural innovators, educators, and leaders, were able to alter the face not only of the Canadian architectural profession, but of Canada's quest for a national identity and culture during the first decades of the twentieth century. At a time when much of that identity was torn between two dominant socio-political forces, to the cultural legacy imparted by French Canada in Quebec, to the steady rise of centralized power within Ottawa, Ontario, and generally throughout English Canada, the Craft ideal attempted to ground many of these differences, to tie the character, style, and national identity of Canada to its greatest natural resource and claim to power – the land.

By the twentieth century, much of urban Canada had already experienced several waves of architectural influence. From the sturdy stone facades of Neoclassical, Beaux-Arts-inspired banks and public buildings, to the ecclesiastical Gothic Revival turrets and spires, and the countless rows of Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian row houses, estates, and mansions, Canada's urban centres represented the full gamut of British, European, and American architectural tropes.[4] However, from the post-colonial vantage point of the late nineteenth century, in terms of built heritage or architectural history, Canada was in short supply.[5] Lacking the relative architectural richness that dotted the American eastern

[4] Percy E. Nobbs, "Architecture in Canada," *JRAIC* (July-September, 1924): 92.
[5] Ibid, 91.

seaboard from New England to the Deep South, many Canadians in search of historic landmarks looked to Quebec City, to the walls of the old citadel that had taken centre stage at the birth of the nation.[6] Citing their historic significance in the 1870s, Lord Dufferin called for the preservation of the ancient stone walls and the reconstruction of the city gates, beginning a slow, but steady process of historical awareness and civic pride in Canada. Later, towards the end of the nineteenth century, when the Canadian architectural profession was in its infancy, seeking officialdom through government regulation, protection, and public esteem, pride in Canadian architectural character, style, and historicism found a form of expression in the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Imported from Britain, and steeped in deep, traditionalist philosophies of design, craftsmanship, and materiality, along with its historical and cultural connections to an expressive aesthetic centred upon architectural nationalism and the promotion of local craft traditions and skills, the Arts and Crafts offered a reliable ally. In the quest to secure a national identity and character of its own, the Arts and Crafts Movement provided Canadian cultural producers, artisans, and architects with the means necessary to create an architectural legacy with the potential to define Canada. From city to city, suburb to suburb, at a time when many Indigenous populations were in the midst of government-sanctioned removals, especially through the Prairies and along the Pacific Coast, the decision to dot the landscape with British-Canadian housing forms sent a clear message about what type of nation Canada was aspiring to become. For while it may not be prudent to paint Canada's many Anglo-centric cultural leaders and producers with the same brush, as little of their views on the subject remain, it is true nonetheless that most would have been at least tangentially aware of Canada's unfolding colonial legacy.

[6] Ibid.

Different for Central Canadians such as Eden Smith and Percy Nobbs, and even more so for those like them who had emigrated from Britain, the lived experiences of they and architects such as Samuel Maclure, who was born on the West Coast, would have varied greatly. Hailing from a selective mix of cultural backgrounds, and spread across a large, geographically variable land mass, Canada's cultural producers contextualized their work and its place within the country according to a host of factors, albeit tied together by a discernible undercurrent of Anglo-Canadian propriety and style.

Ideas and Arguments

Canadian Nationalism and the Rise of the Craft Ideal

From 1867 onwards, the "Canadian Question," as succinctly stated by Goldwin Smith in 1891,[7] arose within several academic and political circles. Many commentators during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw Canada as an experiment, its citizens participants in a laboratory set to test the limits of peace, order, and good government. Canada as "a political expression,"[8] in Smith's view, was to be understood more or less as an idea, a nation defined in a legal sense, but more importantly a country in its own right only so far as it was accepted as such by its citizens, not to mention those in Great Britain, the United States, and the rest of the world. Published in 1930, Harold Innis' economic history, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, presented the idea that Canada was a subservient exporter of raw materials linked to the needs of a succession of metropoles. Thus, Canadian nationalism would remain a pipe dream as long as colonial ties remained intact.[9] Later revisionist histories published first by Carl Berger,[10] and then by Robert

[7] Goldwin Smith, *Canada and the Canadian Question* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1891).
[8] Ibid, 48.
[9] Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), 384.

Brown and Ramsay Cook[11] in the early 1970s, introduced new views on the delicate balance between Canadian nationalism and imperialism which existed in Smith and Innis' time. Charting a delicate path between British colonialism and American annexation, the duelling forces of imperialism and nationalism within Canada became intertwined,[12] the desire for autonomy checked many times by a fear of drifting too far towards or apart from either the mother country across the sea, or the powerful neighbour to the south.[13] Framed within the debate over Canadian nationalism, the Arts and Crafts Movement provided an answer for those who chose to look to the realm of arts and culture for support in constructing a path to nationhood for Canada upon the intellectual battlefield, far from the skirmishes being waged over trade, tariffs, and economic policy. By building legitimacy into more peaceable avenues of nationhood, so the argument went,[14] there could be hope for making the case for Canada, the newfound political strength of the Dominion to be as strong in the League of Nations as it would be upon the international stage of art, architecture, music, and culture.

This dissertation argues that in the struggle to create a national identity, character, and style, many of the most significant and enduring advancements were made in the realm of art and culture. Owing to the substantial outlays of energy, time, and capital spent upon the promotion and cultivation of Canadian identity through the arts, from among a select set of cultural elites, it was made possible in the space of a generation, from roughly the turn of the last century to the 1920s, for Canada to carve out a space on

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[10] Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).
[11] Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974).
[12] Berger, *Sense of* Power, 5-10.
[13] Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 28-9.
[14] A. Y. Jackson, "Dutch Art in Canada: The Last Chapter," *Rebel* IV (November 1919), 65.

the world stage. Though fitting into the nationalist framework as explored by Berger, Brown, Cook, and others, the cultural producers of the time were able, if not to break the mould entirely, to bend it considerably, thus enabling a new form of Canadian cultural consciousness to emerge. To this end, the voices of those closest to this process of cultural invention, and their views on the relationship between Canadian nationalism and the arts, are included, the opinions of numerous artists, craftspeople, and architects, along with those of their colleagues, patrons, and clients, all part of this study. Well-versed in the challenges facing Canadian nationalism at the time, the artists, artisans, and architects of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement made their opinions on the matter known, their many statements on nationalism and the future of Canadian art and culture explored throughout this dissertation.

The Professionalization Debate in Canadian Architecture

By the 1880s, as according to R. D. Gidney and W. P. J. Millar, amid a period of professionalization in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain, the demand for "professional" status, which beyond simple public prestige carried with it a level of formally sanctioned autonomy and self-regulation, had reached peak levels.[15] Begun in 1889, the formation of the Ontario Association of Architects [OAA], which held the attainment of professional status high above all other goals, was the latest in a long line of hopefuls to plead their case before the Legislature.[16] Desirous from the outset to gain the type of public prestige and protection offered by closing the profession to amateurs, the OAA had, according to Geoffrey Simmins, sought to elevate and protect their craft and their work from those, foreign, domestic, or otherwise, who would deign to claim

[15] R. D. Gidney and W. P. J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 248-9.
[16] Ibid, 304.

within Canada the title of "Architect."[17] This dissertation expands upon the views of Gidney, Millar, Simmins, and Kelly Crossman[18] – whose work focuses upon architectural education and training – and argues that beyond a desire for prestige and autonomy, the call for professionalization was at its base a protectionist sentiment shared by the majority of Canadian architects, who, like many other professionals at the time, were seeking to improve their station. Adding to this narrative, the nationalist sentiment provided by the timely arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement to Canada added a complex set of ideals and diverse players, the loudest of which came in the form of a subset of craft idealists, whose contrarian viewpoints proved to be a thorn in the side of conventional wisdom. Seeking authenticity and purity through art, these cultural outliers sought to enrich their craft through lived experiences, whether through material honesty, simplicity of design, or the advancement of function before form. Cutting to the heart of the professionalization debate, the voices and views of the central figures of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement will be examined, the opinions of those who lived and worked during these formative years shedding light upon the earliest days of the profession.

With strong architectural figures emerging out of both Toronto and Montreal, centred around the Arts and Crafts idealism of Eden Smith [1858-1949] in the former, and the studied academic authority of Professor Percy E. Nobbs [1875-1964] at McGill University in the latter, it was not long before the makings of a Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement began to take shape. Add to Smith, Nobbs, and others' voices the Pacific Coast Arts and Crafts sensibilities of Samuel Maclure [1860-1929], working out of

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[17] Geoffrey Simmins, *Ontario Association of Architects: A Centennial History, 1889-1989* (Toronto: The Ontario Association of Architects, 1989), 36-7.
[18] Kelly Crossman, *Architecture in Transition: from Art to Practice, 1885-1906* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987).

British Columbia, and what can be identified as a strong, interconnected regional, Arts and Crafts identity can be argued to have arisen in Canada just as the profession was finding its footing.[19] From the turn of the last century to the interwar period, the debate continued among Canada's architects and cultural elites over what direction the national style ought to take, and how it should be directed, if at all, toward remaining Canadian.[20] This dissertation thus explores questions of modernity, tradition, and nationhood that were often central to such debates.

The Role of Modernism and Antimodernism

The dual forces of modernism and antimodernism played a central role in the coming of the Arts and Crafts Movement to Canada. Industrial and technological developments, including the advent and subsequent popularity of the automobile, telephone, electricity, moving pictures, radio, indoor plumbing, and electric appliances, had transformed the middle-class world view.[21] Shifting from a shared awe and sense of pride in the face of technological progress and industry, middle-class North Americans and Europeans soon came to take for granted the modern comforts of their time, taking advantage of the relative ease with which they could now live, work, and play. Time itself, as argued by Stephen Kern, had through global standardization efforts during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, come to be understood in a much broader context, its newfound universality working in tandem with the aforementioned jolt of technological innovation to make the world a smaller place.[22] With these changes, the concept of what it meant to be human, living in metropolises, amidst dazzling lights,

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[19] Nobbs, "Architecture in Canada," 93.
[20] Eden Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," *Maclean's Magazine*, March, 1911, 98.
[21] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 1-2.
[22] Ibid.

mechanized work, and a growing consumer culture, began to evolve.[23] The burgeoning notion of man as machine, no longer a science-fiction fantasy, had by the late nineteenth century become a reality for millions of factory workers, the assembly-line efficiency of Henry Ford manifesting itself in a new line of thought regarding the relationship between life, work, and death.[24] Also entering into mainstream culture, the rise of pseudoscience – of phrenology, eugenics, and psychoanalysis – made headway into everyday life, the promise of easy answers tempting amid a time of great change.[25] Included in the larger themes of modernity, the ideas of scholars such as Stephen Kern, Ann Douglas, Anson Rabinatch, and Stephen Jay Gould will be added to this discussion to provide an understanding of the world in which the subjects of this study existed.

Publicly celebrated and displayed in a continuous rotation of world's fairs and industrial expositions held annually across the capitals of the Western World from the Victorian Age, to the Space Age, and beyond, modernity in its many forms was revered for its ability to transform the human condition. Keith Walden captures this spirit of industrial progress and public goodwill towards mass consumption in his work regarding the great Industrial Exhibition held in Toronto, upon which this dissertation expands.[26] From a cultural standpoint, the international debut of the Group of Seven, upon the occasion of the 1924-5 British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in London, made as big an impact on the international impression of Canada as a modern nation as did any other.[27]

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[23] Ann Douglas, *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s* (New York: Noonday Press; Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1996).
[24] Anson Rabinatch, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 1.
[25] Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1981).
[26] Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).
[27] Anne Clendinning, "Exhibiting a Nation: Canada at the British Empire Exhibition, 1924-1925," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 39, no. 77 (2006).

Beyond the impressive exhibits of steam engines and motor cars, the moving, naturalistic images of the Canadian Wilds were as much a marker of progress and modernity in their frank, artistic boldness, as any other commodity that Canada had on display.

Within the architectural realm, modernity as a concept is argued by Christopher Armstrong to possess two separate yet related meanings, a split which he refers to as one between the "The Modern Movement" and the "moderne."[28] While the former is described as that which refers to the general, steady progress of technology and innovation, the latter is focused more upon the abstract concept of modernity when applied to the philosophy of design. This dissertation adopts a more nuanced approach to the dichotomy put forth by Armstrong, in particular, when dealing with the many aesthetic, material, and philosophical intricacies inherent to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Built, marketed, and sold as modern homes, outfitted with all of the latest innovations of early twentieth-century domestic living, the homes of the Arts and Crafts Movement were nonetheless designed with a careful, studied historicism that was steeped in tradition, down to every tile, moulding, and shingle. Anachronistic by design, the Arts and Crafts embodied a dualistic, modernist-antimodernist form of pragmatic expressionism that could reconcile electric lighting and intricate indoor plumbing with a handcrafted, material aesthetic that in form and function, was completely antithetical to technological innovation and mass production. Dressed in antimodernist clothes, the products of the Arts and Crafts Movement, from vase to mansion, were consumed by the middle and upper classes for their implicit, modern cultural currency, sold as an ideal of early twentieth-century domestic sophistication and style.

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[28] Christopher Armstrong, *Making Toronto Modern: Architecture and Design, 1895-1975* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 18.

Thus with the Movement's modernist impulses, the Arts and Crafts was at its core a product of what present-day scholars have come to understand as antimodernism, this transformative philosophy to be explored throughout this study. The original British Arts and Crafts Movement as begun by Pugin, and later adapted by Morris and his circle, sought to set back the clock on industrialization, factory automation, and mass production, and instead reach back to the craft traditions of an earlier age.[29] Explained by historians such as T. J. Jackson Lears as an attempt to seek out authentic experiences and an enriched sense of reality through craft and hard work, the Americanized version of the Craft ideal had as much to do with an ostensible rejection of modernity as it did a quest for truth through lived experience.[30] Lears uses the American experience with the Arts and Crafts to highlight not only the contrasts that emerged once the Movement's ideals had crossed the Atlantic, but to show as well, the ways in which the Movement was subverted and adapted to best fit within the larger American identity.[31] Part of what Lears identifies as the "Cult of the Real,"[32] the American quest for authentic, real life experiences, trades, and products, the American Arts and Crafts Movement arrived to a country, in many ways similar to its neighbour to the north, that was already deep into the struggle of becoming a modern, urban, industrial, society. Centred predominantly among the elites of the Northeast from New England to New York, the Cult of the Real was at its most fervent among those for whom struggle had been the most absent. Tied up as well with a belief in American Exceptionalism, in the notion that the American experience

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[29] Katherine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr, and Carole Silver, eds., *The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts By William Morris and His Circle From Canadian Collections* (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1993).
[30] T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981).
[31] Ibid, 62-5.
[32] Ibid, 68-70.

was somehow unique, the unfolding narrative of the American Craft ideal assumed a quality of rose-tinted nostalgia for a time not so long ago when real life was only as distant as the next harvest, hunt, or barn raising. This study builds – and in many key ways, departs – from Lears' view of the challenges faced by the American Arts and Crafts Movement, shifting the relevant aspects of his argument to the Canadian context. For while the American experience was largely defined by a steady devolution of ideals, the Canadian experience was in many ways shaped by a keen nationalist spirit, the realms of art, architecture, and craft, seeking to impart a nationalistic style, creating in the process what could be regarded as curated expressions of Canada and Canadianness.

The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement

Changing focus to the Canadian context, the work of Ian McKay in relation to what he describes as the invention and simultaneous exploitation of "the folk" and "folk culture" of rural Nova Scotia during the interwar period, has been of large benefit to this study, the origins of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement owing a great deal to this and other examples of regionalized craft idealism.[33] From among the key practitioners of Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement, including Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and Samuel Maclure, and vividly captured by the Group of Seven, and others, a carefully curated image of Canada was created for consumption both at home and abroad. Aligning in many ways with McKay's interpretation of "the folk," this study places a larger degree of agency in the hands of "the folk" themselves, they in many cases being active participants, the practitioners and consumers of the Movement and its wares often tangentially, if not directly involved in its production. Viewed thus, the British-centric,

[33] Ian McKay, *Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

nationalistic, aesthetic idealism of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was a creature of its own making, culturally constructed to fit an image not of some imagined other, but of a shared, imagined past from which lessons could be learned about the present and future. Similar to what McKay identifies in folklorist Helen Creighton's attempts to document and reconstruct a history of rural Nova Scotia, the process of Gramscian cultural hegemony at play within the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement served to carve a "folk" culture out of the imagined past of the supposed shared experiences of urban, middle-class Anglo-Canadians. Packaged and sold as a symbol of national identity, nationhood, and character, the products of the Movement were marketed as the epitome of cultured, good taste. The added benefit of creating a lucrative niche for Canadian artisans, architects, and craftspeople, while simultaneously placing an attractive, dignified front on the world stage, was thus all the better for those seeking to profit from a particular vision of Canada.

The transition from folk traditionalism to cultural production plays a central role throughout this study, the cultivating efforts of Canada's cultural elite having had a significant impact on the shaping not only of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, but upon the trajectory of Canadian national identity and culture between 1890 and 1945. To this end, the efforts of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto feature heavily throughout this dissertation, their self-described role as cultural gatekeepers and arbiters of good taste, discussed at length. Founding member Augustus Bridle's history the Arts and Letters Club,[34] backed by a collection of primary documents relevant to the Club's history and membership, provide a window into the Club's significant cultural contribution to early twentieth-century Canada. Founded by a who's who of Canada's

[34] Augustus Bridle, *The Story of the Club* (Toronto: The Arts and Letters Club, 1945).

cultural elite, including Augustus Bridle, Eden Smith, Vincent Massey, and the entirety of the future Group of Seven, to name but a few, the Arts and Letters Club was central to the promotion of an Anglo-Canadian view of arts and culture. The effect that this had upon the development of mainstream Canadian art, architecture, and the forming of a national culture – with a well-attended gallery showing here, and a high-profile architectural commission there – was that it was not long before the cultural aims of the Club became synonymous with fashionable, twentieth-century, English Canada.

Gender and the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement

Beyond the considerably male-centric milieu of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, which both in spirit and in practice all too often pushed female participation to the side, there were those who worked to bring a female voice to the Canadian Craft ideal. An uphill battle within a design- and craftsmanship-focused movement which at its core favoured an outwardly masculine materiality and rugged, rough-hewn aesthetic, the role for women within the Arts and Crafts Movement was often overlooked, their contribution overshadowed by the accomplishments of men. While the Victorian Era had, from an aesthetic standpoint, been a boon to the decorative arts, assuming a matronly, feminine ideal, the arrival of the twentieth century, and of the Arts and Crafts in particular, witnessed a quick shift into a much simpler, function-forward, more masculine approach to design and domestic space. Hence, in an effort to offset this narrative, and bring to light an alternative viewpoint, this dissertation addresses the issue of gender, and includes a discussion of the significant cultural contributions made by women. Female artists and craft workers, including Emily Carr,[35] as well as the majority female

[35] Gerta Moray, "Emily Carr and the Traffic in Native Images" in *Antimodernism and Artistic Expression: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, ed. Linda Jessup (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

membership of the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada – which helped bridge the gender divide between they and the male-dominated professional trade organizations and private clubs – are discussed for their significant cultural roles within the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement along with that of the female-run Canadian Handicrafts Guild.[36]

Viewed within the context of the home, the domestic sphere to which women ostensibly belonged, the question of gender and its role within the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement can be further understood through an examination of the emerging consumer culture of the twentieth century.[37] Following in the theoretical framework of Valerie Korinek's study of *Chatelaine* during the Postwar Era,[38] this study looks to the articles and advertisements found in *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, as well as those found within Canadian architectural trade journals published from the 1880s to the 1950s. Located at the confluence of several divergent streams of thought related to aestheticism, materiality, art, architecture, and design, the search for a Canadian national style and identity through the often gender-influenced evolution of domestic ideals can be found in a study of the Canadian home. Explored in detail by Peter Ennals and Deryck W. Holdsworth,[39] and Avi Friedman and David Krawitz,[40] the complex cultural history of the Canadian domicile informs much of this study, the framework provided by these and others contributing to the research and fieldwork portion of this dissertation.

The Evolution of Canadian Domesticity and the Rise of the Suburbs

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[36] Ellen McLeod, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild*. (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1999).
[37] Richard W. Fox and T. J. Jackson Lears, eds., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).
[38] Velerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).
[39] Peter Ennals and Deryck W. Holdsworth, *Homeplace: The Making of the Canadian Dwelling Over Three Centuries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998).
[40] Avi Friedman and David Krawitz, *Peeking Through the Keyhole: The Evolution of North American Homes* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

This dissertation argues in support of Ennals and Holdsworth's view that the Canadian dwelling has evolved over the last three centuries, transitioning from the simple necessity of shelter from the elements, to what since the Victorian Age we would today recognize as a "home."[41] Considered within this context, the Arts and Crafts house can be understood as a product of the late Victorian-Era "home" stage of modern domesticity. Constructed with the latest innovations in modern domestic comfort and convenience, the homes of the Arts and Crafts Movement were products of their time, complicated nonetheless by the shroud of antimodernist idealism under which their designers honed their trademark aesthetic and feel. Fitting into the definition of what Ennals and Holdsworth term as the, "self-conscious house,"[42] the homes of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, mostly suburban, and marketed to middle- and upper-class homeowners, were for the most part the product of privilege, of the status of homeowner, which increasingly into the twentieth century came to be a marker of social standing. Informed as well by the scholarship of Friedman and Krawitz, whose work conceptualizes the home as a fluid entity, able to adapt and change in order to best suit the domestic trends of the day, this study closely follows the notion that modern domesticity, and the concept of "the home" in particular, was malleable, a form of flexible cultural expression like any other.

Taking a cue from Gertrude Stein's oft-quoted, 1937 observation and critique, upon witnessing the sea of new suburban housing which had replaced her childhood home and farmstead in Oakland, California, that, "there is no there there,"[43] this study additionally focuses upon the conceptualization of geographic space as explored by urban

[41] Ennals and Holdsworth, *Homeplace*, 3.
[42] Ibid, 149-70.
[43] Gertrude Stein, *Everybody's Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1937, 289).

geographer Richard Harris. Building upon Harris' contention that Canada's suburbs evolved over the course of the twentieth century from places of considerable demographic diversity to the more familiar swaths of homogenous, white, conservative, domestic conformity with which they are most commonly associated today,[44] this dissertation argues that the Arts and Crafts Movement was an important stage in the development of suburban Canada. Growing in step with one another through the early decades of the twentieth century, the two related, contemporary phenomena – the rise and subsequent conformity of the suburbs and the arrival and subsequent popularity of the Arts and Crafts Movement – fit well together, eclipsing one another as each waxed, waned, and faded from public memory.

With the explosion of homeownership in Canada at the outset of the twentieth century, as documented by Harris,[45] came the creation of the now popular home improvement industry. Creating yet another avenue through which traditional gender lines related to domesticity could be blurred and bent, the rise of the home improvement industry brought with it a complex consumer process whereby the physical, material side of homebuilding, renovation, or restoration work was no longer the sole domain of men. By way of the more female-directed print ad and home delivery catalogue, the industry soon lent itself to a conversation between spouses.[46] In terms of the Craft Movement, into which the modern home improvement industry was born, this study argues that there was a significant, albeit less conspicuous shift in behaviour among homeowners inherent in the further intertwining of the amateur-professional consumer experience that quickly

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[44] Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1900-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 5-8.
[45] Richard Harris, *Building a Market: The Rise of the Home Improvement Industry, 1914-1960*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).
[46] Ibid, 2.

came to define the relationship between homeowner and craftsman. In their pursuit of real life, authentic experiences, the modern homeowner needed to go no further than a weekend spent papering the front hall, tiling a bathroom, or repairing a leaky faucet.

The North American Bungalow Craze

Growing in tandem with middle-class homeownership, suburbia, and the rising demand for a modern, twentieth-century home, built with an aesthetic materiality that incorporated antimodernist ideals with a sense of national style and identity, there was one solution that rose above the rest – the bungalow. The subject of many studies, what has been identified as the American Bungalow Craze of the early twentieth century also had a significant role in Canada, adopting its own host of national signifiers and design cues north of the border. This study expands upon the work of bungalow historians Clay Lancaster[47] and Anthony D. King,[48] along with that of historical commentators, including Charles E. White,[49] who witnessed the phenomenon firsthand. This dissertation supports Lancaster's contention that, "the American bungalow [w]as an art form [...] a document reflecting the life of its era,"[50] and that the advent of the bungalow was, "inherent [in] the establishment of a democracy on this continent [...] an effective social leveling device, setting the bulk of the population into the middle financial bracket."[51] Furthermore, this study upholds King's broader, global context regarding the bungalow, including his assertion that the popular house type served as a means of testing for a host of historical forces, including, "colonialism, industrialisation, capitalism and socialism, urbanisation

[47] Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow, 1880-1930* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1985).
[48] Anthony D. King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984;1995).
[49] Charles E. White, *The Bungalow Book* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923).
[50] Lancaster, *The American Bungalow*, 11.
[51] Ibid, 12-13.

and suburbanisation, and the emergence of a global economy and culture."[52] Adding historical context, the work of White and others are included as a foundation to the modern scholarship, with White's prescient premonition, that, "[i]t seems that these little dwellings have come to stay,"[53] aptly capturing the enduring popularity of one of the most pervasive cultural artifacts of the early twentieth century.

The cultural phenomenon of the North American Bungalow Craze represented the strongest conscious effort directed towards the consumer public on the idea of the house as more than a home, as instead something akin to a living entity, a part of daily life that had become synonymous with modern living. Carrying on the Gothic literary tradition of the house as a character – from haunted mansion, to mad scientist's lab, to the dilapidated refuge of ghosts, goblins, and lovelorn spinsters – the popularity of the bungalow, appearing as it did in song, verse,[54] and popular magazines,[55] highlights the extent to which this house type became a staple of North American life. This dissertation thus addresses the notions of "house," "home," and of domestic space generally, as possessing the transformative powers given it by both those who designed and built them, and by the homeowners who lived within. Albeit to a far less pervasive extent than that to which the automobile and the allure of the open road would come to define the popular culture of the next generation, the bungalow was similarly endowed with the power to capture the imagination, a consumer product that had the ability to define one's place in the world.

The Cultural Impact of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement

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[52] King, *The Bungalow*, viii.
[53] Ibid.
[54] For a good example of bungalow-based poetry, seek no further than: Burges Johnson, "Bungal-Ode," *Good Housekeeping*, February, 1909, 176.
[55] These include *Good Housekeeping* in the United States, and *Canadian Homes and Gardens* in Canada.

Taking a cue from Joy Parr's immersive approach to history, in particular her gender-based labour history of two former industrial towns in Southern Ontario, where she spent four years "long lingering amid the particularities of daily life [...] listening to talk exchanged across kitchen tables, parsing payrolls and ledgers of plants,"[56] this dissertation involves a considerable amount of fieldwork. Visits made to dozens of homes in Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria, were conducted in the hope of engaging with the closest possible examples of what this study has identified as the ongoing cultural influence of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. The fieldwork helped create meaningful connections with homeowners, their stories, views, and distinctive relationships with their homes connecting them to the architects and craftspeople who designed and built them. The process as a whole endowed this study with valuable insights into the lasting cultural impact of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.

Looking as well to scholarship closer in scope to the present study, the work of Peter Stevens, concerning the history of family cottaging in Northern Ontario, for which "personal interviews formed a central part"[57] of the findings, was of great value. Encountering many of the same challenges and rewards inherent to oral history of this type, this dissertation would not be complete without the experiences and stories gained from homeowners across Canada. Though similar to Stevens and others' experiences and views on oral history,[58] in which self-selection, problematic sampling conditions, and the simple passage of time, can pose challenges to interpreting the data gained from

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[56] Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 229.
[57] Peter A. Stevens, "Getting Away from It All: Family Cottaging in Postwar Ontario." (PhD diss., York University, 2010), 450.
[58] For more on oral history as a scholarly tool see: Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History, 3rd Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Robert Perks and Allistair Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader, 2nd Edition* (London and New York: Routeledge, 2006); and the Canadian Oral History Association website: https://canoha.wordpress.com/

participants, the benefits outweighed the deficits. Careful to accept and learn from the limitations of oral history, and to avoid the same philosophical pitfalls encountered by ethnographers, oral historians, and folklorists, such as McKay's Helen Creighton, this study incorporates participants' views with objectivity, agency, and respect.

Fate of the Craft Ideal

Lastly, this dissertation explores the fate of the Arts and Crafts Movement – in Canada, as well the United States and Great Britain – its eventual decline as much to do with its waning popularity over time, as it was with its rapid early rise to fame. A victim of its own success, the Craft ideal, alongside the quest for authenticity through lived experience, quality craftsmanship, natural materials, and hard work, was soon corrupted by mass production and artifice, the high demand for its products leading directly back to the same deleterious forces of over-commercialization which the Movement's founders had sought to reject.[59] The powers of mechanical reproduction, able to churn out perfect facsimiles of everything from art prints, to craft wares, and even entire homes, proved too adept at the task of mimicry, the ceaseless manufacture of wares made popular by the Movement's artists, craftspeople, and architects, reduced to an unending series of catalogue items for sale at local department stores. Demoted thus over time from a Movement to a style, the Arts and Crafts Movement and its variety of cultural products lost their ability to stir critical thought about education, training, regulation, professionalism, and the competing realms of physical and mechanical labour, which were erased with every cheap reproduction that hit the factory floor.

Reduced to a style, and thus divorced from the metamorphic strength it once possessed as a transformative, antimodernist Movement, the Arts and Crafts became

[59] Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 83-90.

increasingly vulnerable to the march of time, the changing fashions and tastes of the consumer public ensuring its swift demise in the face of Art Nouveau, Art Deco, and Mid-Century Modern. However, despite what appeared to be the death of the Movement, this dissertation argues that the spirit of the Arts and Crafts lives on, its firm principles of craftsmanship, traditionalism, and authenticity having never quite faded into obscurity. Especially true in Canada, a nation which continued to grapple with the complexities of national identity well into the twentieth century,[60] the nationalist bent inherent to the Craft ideal was able to survive the decades following its decline in the face of modernism with its principles intact. Expressed through the postwar years and beyond by a handful of determined Canadian artists, craftspeople, and architects united in the search for meaning at the crossroads of art, culture and nationhood, the spirit of the Movement can still be found in many mediums, across every province and territory in Canada.

Chapter Organization

Chapter One opens with an examination of the British origins of the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Movement's founders – A. W. N. Pugin, John Ruskin [1819-1900], Philip Webb [1831-1915], and William Morris – are discussed, their respective roles as the progenitors of the Craft ideal compared and contrasted in an effort to better understand their guiding philosophies of aestheticism, art, and design. The discussion then shifts to an examination of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, which took the early idealism of Pugin, Ruskin, Webb, and Morris, and transformed it into something bigger, bolder, more consumer-driven, and commercial, signifying a massive departure from its traditionalist, antimodernist roots. Next, the discussion moves once more to

[60] *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951*, Library and Archives Canada.

focus upon the simultaneous, albeit distinctive methods by which the Arts and Crafts Movement arrived in Canada. Tied by bonds of empire to one, and by a common geography to the other, Canada's relationship with the British-born, American-adopted Arts and Crafts Movement was at heart a parable for Canada's quest for identity. Lastly, Canada's pre-eminent Arts and Crafts architects – Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and Samuel Maclure – will be given a proper introduction, their place within the deeply politicized debates over nationalism, modernism, antimodernism, and the creation of Canadian identity through art and culture, closing out the chapter.

Chapter Two begins with the history of the Canadian architectural profession, from its earliest organization under the OAA in 1889, to the failings of that same organization in the event of the passage and subsequent legal de-clawing of the Ontario Architects' Act in 1890. The discussion then turns to the establishment of Canada's two largest architectural colleges, founded within the University of Toronto and McGill University, each of which in their own way became "Schools of Architecture" akin to the Prairie or Chicago School of the United States. Looking first to Ontario, the OAA, and the creation of the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto, the influence of Arts and Crafts idealist Eden Smith, and his compatriots within the Architectural Eighteen Club, are all explored in detail, the debate over nationalism, professionalization, modernity, authenticity, and style, remaining central to the discussion. Moving from Toronto to Montreal, the same questions are then explored from the vantage point of the School of Architecture at McGill, the views of Percy Nobbs and his fellow members within the Province of Quebec Association of Architects [PQAA], discussed with an eye towards meaningful comparison.

Chapter Three begins with a discussion of the modern city as realized through the efforts of those aligned with the City Beautiful movement of the late nineteenth century. The concept of modernity itself, from an urban, architectural standpoint is explored further, the influence of antimodernism and its champions within the Arts and Crafts Movement part of the complex history of city planning. Moving down to street level, the histories of Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and Samuel Maclure are rejoined, focus shifting from their philosophies of design and professional principles, to an overview of their architectural footprint within the urban and suburban landscapes of Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria. Featuring an in-depth look at their artistic influences and building styles, the work of Canada's Arts and Crafts masters demonstrates the solutions found by each to the problems poised by those like themselves, who were caught up in the question of how best to advance as a nation lacking a clear sense of identity.

Chapter Four explores the complex network of interconnected membership and thought that formed the cultural foundation of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. First and foremost, the influence of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, an organization which self-identified as "a gathering of the arts,"[61] its membership including many of the country's leading architects, painters, playwrights, musicians, and wealthy patrons, cannot be overstated. Following close behind, the role of the Group of Seven, their history, and celebrated work, is discussed in relation to their impact within the larger Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. From there, the chapter moves on to discuss the role of the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, the majority female-run organization bridging the gender divide between the exclusively all-male spaces of the trade associations, and private clubs, such as the OAA and the Arts and Letters Club, to that of

[61] "A Gathering of the Arts," *A Gathering of the Arts* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1908), 3.

the female-run Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Thus to the latter, the chapter concludes with a discussion of the Montreal-based Canadian Handicrafts Guild, their brand of craft exceptionalism, packaged with a nationalist, labour-positive set of guiding principles, forming the final link that bound these and many other individuals, associations, and clubs, together in a common purpose.

Chapter Five brings the discussion into the sitting rooms and parlours of Canada's remaining Arts and Crafts homes, including highlights from among the dozens of interviews and site visits conducted by the author. The current owners of Arts and Crafts homes built in Toronto by Eden Smith, in Montreal by Percy Nobbs, and in Victoria by Samuel Maclure, were interviewed in their homes using a standardized set of questions, a process which included house tours and photo-documentation. Conducted in the immersive, academic style of oral history as employed by Parr and Stevens, the fieldwork provided ample stories, data, and insights gained from one participant to the next, serving to enrich the story as a whole. Using the example of McKay and others familiar with the study and potential subversion of folk cultures, the fieldwork and subsequent analysis takes into careful consideration the agency of the participants, their lived experiences and views on the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement objectively contextualized for their historical merit. Delving thus into the enduring cultural influence of the Canadian Craft ideal, this chapter concludes with a discussion of the survival and future potential of the Arts and Crafts Movement as it continues to evolve.

Conclusion

More than a simple history of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, its central ideas, personalities, and players, this dissertation demonstrates three main assertions.

First, there can be confidently said to have existed a Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. From the English cottage vernacular of Eden Smith in Toronto, to the studied architectural eclecticism of Percy Nobbs in Montreal, to the rocky Pacific Coast aestheticism of Samuel Maclure, the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was as rich and culturally diverse as its British and American counterparts. Second, the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was largely the product of an interconnected assortment of like-minded, artists, architects, and other cultural producers, who mutually benefited from its promotion as a marker of modern, middle-class, urban, and predominantly Anglo-Canadian culture and identity. Among the cultural elite of metropolitan Canada, to those endowed by name and talent to shift the eyes of the nation from one piece of cultural production to the other, and thereby to define the tastes of a people eager for national prestige, the task of bringing forth the ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement was as much self-serving as it was believed to be in the national interest. These first two points are joined by a third – that one hundred years removed, there can be found in several large Canadian cities an enduring appreciation and often deeply personal connection to a craft tradition whose story has yet to reach its end. For every participant interviewed, from Toronto, to Montreal, to Victoria, there was revealed to be homeowner after homeowner who valued the cultural significance of the Craft ideal and of the legacy it had left behind. In sum, the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was real, it was the vision of the country's educated cultural elite, and today, one hundred years later, it remains a force that has yet to be spent in full.

Chapter One:

The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement

Introduction

If Tolkien's fantasy of Middle Earth were a reality, it would be the finest known example of an idyllic, Arts and Crafts-inspired earthly paradise. Hobbiton, with its thatched roofs, round doors and windows, and earthen palette, would make any Arts and Crafts designer, from Pugin, to Morris, to Wright, feel very much at home – though the latter may find the lack of straight lines a bit unnerving. Tolkien's creation, replete with its own mythologies, languages, races, designs, illustrations, maps, genealogies, and sense of history and place, lays out the blueprints for what, in Arts and Crafts terminology, can be classified as total design. Nothing is left to chance. The author holds the reader's hand throughout the journey, pointing out with pride the attention to detail – the illuminated Elvish script, the earth-tone wall hangings, and the heavy oak mantle whose warm glow heats Bag End. Tolkien guides his "clients" through his creation much like the artists who inspired him, the Morris prints, Stickley furniture, and Tiffany glass re-imagined as Elvish needlepoint, Dwarvish metalwork, and Hobbit handicraft.

The Hobbits of Middle Earth can be seen as the ideal citizens of a world governed by strong Arts and Crafts principles. They as a people are hardworking, skilled, and inventive. Tolkien describes them as an "unobstructive but very ancient people [who] love peace and quiet and good tilled earth [as well as] a well-ordered and well-farmed countryside."[1] Their antimodernist tendencies are made clear by the author: "They [Hobbits] do not and did not understand or like machines more complicated than a forge-

[1] J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1954), 1.

bellows, a water-mill, or a hand-loom, though they were skilful with tools."[2] Thus in Tolkien's fantasy, medieval guilds and professions, such as blacksmithing, carpentry, cooperage, leatherworking, or stonemasonry, are all alive and well, carried out diligently by a people whose strongest allegiances lay with nature, tradition, and the old way of doing things – with a care and respect for craft and material that the real world had, by Tolkien's time, already begun to leave behind. Although to take the analogy any further would be perhaps – to borrow from Bilbo's words on his own mortality – to spread too little butter over too much bread, the comparison between Tolkien's creation and the real world influences that inspired it seems as a good a place as any from which to begin.

British Origins: From the Gothic Revival to the English Arts and Crafts

Before a discussion of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement can commence, the foundations of the Movement's complex ideological and cultural history must considered, its British origins of distinct importance to its understanding within the North American context. From the Gothic Revival to the Arts and Crafts, from Britain to North America, the Movement's journey from the British industrial heartland to the freshly paved streets of suburban Canada saw the vision of a small set of artists and architects who sought to revive the craft traditions of the Old World transmitted and reinterpreted in the New. The quest for nationhood within Canada though not unique, was sought in as distinct a fashion as any other, its complex cultural legacy one which to this day has been built upon contested ground. Seeking for permanence in the years following Confederation, architecture soon became a symbolic method by which Canada's coming of age could be measured, the creation of a national style of architecture towards the end of the nineteenth century lending itself to a variety of cultural leaders and trendsetters,

[2] Ibid, 1.

each with their own vision and cultural biases. We will now turn to this process before continuing on to the history of Canada's foray into the Arts and Crafts Movement, and by extension, into its first sustained effort to find a style of its own.

Towards the latter half of the Victorian Era, as the landed gentry in Britain began to experience the financial strain associated with the absorbent costs of maintaining the family estate, ruins came into fashion. Previously pulled down or left to rot in abandoned fields, Britain's architectural remnants were viewed by many as eyesores, their hulking, unfashionable edifices unfit for life in the Industrial Age. Saddled with debt towards the end of the nineteenth century, as familial estates became subdivided and sold off, the presence of a crumbling old priory or hunting lodge on one's grounds, once tantamount to poverty, soon became an unexpected windfall, a medieval relic in one's backyard a selling point well into the Edwardian Age. Bolstered earlier in the century by the popularity of Gothic Revivalist A. W. N. Pugin, and then later through William Morris' formation of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, the reverence for Britain's architectural heritage eventually reached nearly every corner of polite society. Linked by Pugin, Morris, and many others to a pride in British nationalism and history, this newfound interest in either preserving or faithfully recreating the edifices of the past became connected to a sense of patriotic duty. Delving deeper, it can be argued that this Arts and Crafts-derived fascination with British architecture soon focused its energies into a regional, local mindset, the tracery, tiling patterns, and rooflines of one county or town to the next, becoming a subject of scholarly attention. Carried forward by the progenitors of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, the preference for building from nature within the bounds of traditional materiality and craftwork further promoted a

closely-knit, regionalized nationalism through architecture – a core concept of the Movement which was transmitted across the Atlantic. Beyond speculative property values and a renewed national pride, there was yet another catalyst to the resurgence in the popularity of ancient buildings and ruins – the rise of Gothic literature. Featuring a penchant for castles, old mansions, and crumbling abbeys, these tales of the supernatural became just as worthy an ally to the cause of Gothic Revivalism as any other.

Anyone familiar with Gothic literature will be familiar with the following: *The Castle of Otranto*[3] [1764], *Pride and Prejudice*[4] [1813], *Frankenstein*[5] [1818], *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*[6] [1831], *The Fall of the House of Usher*[7] [1839], *Great Expectations*[8] [1861], *The Portrait of Dorian Grey*[9] [1890], or *Dracula*[10] [1897]. The architectural elements that create the setting for these melodramas – Dr. Frankenstein's lab, Quasimodo's be-gargoyled bell tower, or Miss Havisham's dilapidated mansion – are all characters unto themselves. Gothic historian Megan Aldrich agrees, making reference to the forward, written by Sir Walter Scott, to Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otronto*:

> He who, in early youth, has happened to pass a solitary night in one of the few ancient mansions which the fashion of more modern times has left undespoiled of their original furniture, has probably experienced, that the gigantic and preposterous figures dimly visible in the defaced tapestry, the remote clang of the distant doors which divide him from living society, the deep darkness which involves the high and fretted roof of the apartment, the dimly-seen pictures of ancient knights, renowned for their valour and perhaps for their crimes, the varied and indistinct sounds which disturb the silent desolation of a half-deserted mansion; and, to crown all, the feeling that carries us back to the ages of feudal power and papal superstition, join together to excite a corresponding sensation of supernatural awe, if not of terror.[11]

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[3] Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (London: Tho. Lownds, 1764).
[4] Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* (London: Thomas Egerton, 1813).
[5] Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* (London: Lackington, Hughes, Harding, Mavis, & Jones, 1818).
[6] Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* (Paris: Charles Gosselin Libraire, 1831).
[7] Edgar Allan Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher* (Philadelphia: Burton's Gentleman's Magazine, 1839).
[8] Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1861).
[9] Oscar Wilde, *The Portrait of Dorian Grey* (Philadelphia: Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, 1890).
[10] Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1897).
[11] Megan Aldrich, "Gothic Sensibility: The Early Years of the Gothic Revival" in *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival*, ed. Paul Atterbury (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 13-14.

The ruins of medieval Britain and Europe, which into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries still dotted the countryside, and lingered within most city centres, had in many cases fallen badly into disrepair. Eerie reminders of a forgotten era, these architectural skeletons of the past became the inspiration for many a penny dreadful, their prominent role in popular literature helping bring about one of the most significant architectural phenomena of the last two hundred years – the Gothic Revival.

At the time of his death in 1852, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin's short life of forty years had produced a remarkable body of work, one whose influence would continue to be felt upon the realm of design and architecture in the English-speaking world well into the next century. Considered by many to be the "Master of the Gothic Revival," and perhaps less directly, the grandfather of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Pugin's philosophy of design was founded upon a set of strong guiding principles. Pugin is recorded to have spoken quickly and plainly, similar to the speed with which he completed his designs. Rosemary Hill speaks to this fact, referring to a one-month period in which Pugin completed two churches and a cathedral.[12] So notorious was Pugin for his uncanny rapidity, the popular English newspaper *Punch* once parodied the hasty architect, dubbing him "Pugsby," a man able to supply "every article in the medieval line [...] Designs for Cathedrals made in five and forty minutes."[13] Underlying Pugin's rapidity of work and speech, was his unrepentant zeal for truth. Not necessarily a Romantic, as Hill suggests, "Pugin never saw himself as an artist in the sense of being

[12] Rosemary Hill, "Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin: A Biographical Sketch," in *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival*, ed. Paul Atterbury (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 31.
[13] Ibid.

individually expressive. He [instead] believed in the objective truth of his ideas."[14] To this end, that of his quest for truth in design, Pugin was obsessive.

Between contracts, Pugin spent his time scouring the British countryside for medieval architectural relics. Like an entomologist put to the task of labelling every conceivable species of moth, ant, or beetle, Pugin made it his life's work to discover and catalogue every type of archway, lock, spire, glass, or any other piece of medieval design he could find. English art historian Andrew Saint suggests that Pugin's obsession with Gothic detail was part of a larger trend among British architects and historians at the time, including Thomas Rickman [1776-1841], whose 1817 publication, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture*, introduced the terms, "Early English," "Decorated," and "Perpendicular," for the classification of English Gothic, terms which are still used to this day.[15] This heightened attention to architectural detail, Saint argues, was part of the transition away from the much more two-dimensional Neoclassical style which had been preoccupied with surfaces, as opposed to the Gothic, which was increasingly concerned with every aspect of construction, providing a third dimension of architectural design.[16] To place this transition from two to three dimensions in context with the later Arts and Crafts Movement, it can be said that Pugin was making considerable forays into the notion of total design, his pioneering efforts towards attention to detail and his quest for truth in many ways ahead of his time.

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[14] Ibid, 39.
[15] Thomas Rickman, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1817).
[16] Andrew Saint, "Pugin's Architecture in Context," in *A.W.N. Pugin: Master of Gothic Revival*, ed. Paul Atterbury (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 82.

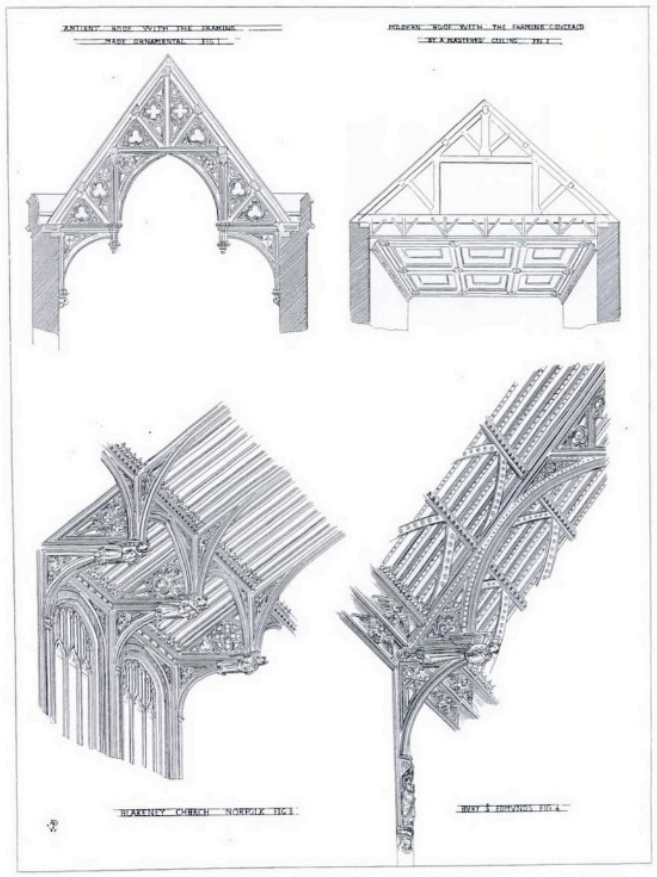

Figure 1.1 Details of timber construction by A. W. N. Pugin. From Pugin, *The True Principles of Pointed or Christian Architecture* (London, 1841). Though typical of other Gothic Revivalists of his day, Pugin's scientific approach to the minutiae of architectural detail was unmatched.

Pugin believed that Gothic architecture and design had attained perfection somewhere around 1300, every practical concern facing builders even up to his own time, having been solved.[17] From this starting point, Pugin was able to focus his careful study of medieval designs and antiquities into different typologies of church design. Starting with the segregation of architectural schemes for inexpensive or expensive, large or small, city or country, Pugin took these criteria further, expanding his typologies to include separate categories for regional and national design sensibilities and styles.[18] Despite the architectural trends of the day, of which Pugin early on been a part, which saw the construction of Gothic churches made from a mix of European design elements, Pugin sought to break the mould by constructing in England, churches of purely English

[17] Ibid, 87.
[18] Ibid, 88-90.

design, while in Ireland or elsewhere he would build churches that reflected the design elements of that country.[19] Pugin was known to delve deep into the minute, regional differences in architectural style and character, going to great lengths to stay true to the local historical context in which he was building. This notion of regionalized nationalism expressed through architecture and design helped set the stage for the Arts and Crafts architects that followed. Thus, the craft idealists' desire to build from nature, to reflect the natural elements of the country or region in which they lived and worked, borrowed heavily from the founding principles of context and place set in motion by Pugin.

Historicism too, formed a central pillar of Pugin's design principles. Having mastered the connection between locality and design, Pugin was simultaneously conscious of creating a link to the past. Although Pugin stopped short of desiring of his clients that they lead archaic, medieval lives, the architect did hope to revive, at least in spirit, a modicum of medieval English society and religion.[20] Uncomfortable with the concepts of originality and progress for their own sakes, which in his view threatened to unhinge society, Pugin sought a middle ground in which the Gothic could be conceived of as a living language used to instruct the present through the principles of the past.[21] Pugin invented his own form of Gothic Revivalism, featuring a mix of ancient design principles with modern practicalities. Especially true in his domestic architecture, such as his own home at Ramsgate, Pugin's innovative use of brickwork was a prime example of his ability to adapt the foundational building blocks of the Gothic to meet the requirements of the Modern Age. Carried forward, this distinctive blend of traditionalist

[19] Ibid, 92-3.
[20] Ibid, 89.
[21] Ibid.

design elements and historical aestheticism into the design and construction of modern structures, became a staple of the Movement as it blossomed over the next half century.

Though it would be problematic to draw a direct line of descent from Pugin to Morris, to Wright, an Arts and Crafts family tree with Pugin at its base would paint a more accurate picture of how the "Master of the Gothic Revival" fits into the Movement's genesis.[22] From Pugin's quiver came many different arrows, each of his ideas on art, design, truth, faith, and architecture making their mark on the creative processes of several generations of architect to follow. Pugin's strong sense of place and history, along with his pursuit of truth in design, and his reverence for the picturesque and of natural materials, as well as his renowned attention to detail, were of great influence. Indeed there cannot be found a member of the Arts and Crafts Movement, whether among William Butterfield [1814-1900], Philip Webb, Edwin Lutyens [1869-1944], and William Morris in Britain, Stickley and Wright in the United States, or Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure in Canada,[23] who were not artistically and philosophically indebted to Pugin.

If the Arts and Crafts Movement can be said to owe its origins to Pugin, it can be argued that its soul belongs to William Morris. Morris embodied the spirit of the Arts and Crafts perhaps better than any other, his life's work and dedication to the Movement's guiding principles a testament to this fact. Born in 1834 to middle-class parents, Morris had the opportunity to attend Exeter College at Oxford, where he became exposed to the radical ideals of a group of avant-garde intellectuals known as the Pre-Raphaelite

[22] Ibid, 98.
[23] Jessica L. Mace, "Nation Building: Gothic Revival Houses in Upper Canada and Canada West, c. 1830-1867" (PhD diss., York University, 2015).

Brotherhood, or Pre-Raphaelites.[24] Founded in 1848 by an eclectic, but like-minded group of English painters, poets, and critics, the Pre-Raphaelites were enamoured with the philosophy and writings of Gothic Revivalist John Ruskin. Ruskin's five volume, *Modern Painters*[25] [1843-60], championed the cause of the emerging artists of his day who sought to break free of the Royal Academy, and chose instead to seek truth in art through nature.[26] Additionally, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*[27] [1849], and its sequel, *The Stones of Venice*[28] [1851-53], laid out Ruskin's foundational principles of architecture – sacrifice, truth, power, beauty, life, memory, and obedience – becoming one of the Pre-Raphaelites' most revered texts.[29] It was amidst these free-thinking artists and poets, that Morris lived his most formative years, and received his education.

Figure 1.2 Art from Nature. William Morris' first of many woodblock-printed wallpaper designs, *Trellis* [1864] represents one of the earliest editions of the artist's most famous pattern, based on an original illustration of the same name created in 1862. Pattern seen here (Museum no. E.452-1919) from the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

[24] Carole Silver, "Setting the Crooked Straight: The Work of William Morris," in *The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts By William Morris and His Circle From Canadian Collections*, eds., Katharine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr, and Carole Silver (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1993), 2.
[25] John Ruskin, *Modern Painters: Vol. 1-5* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1843-60).
[26] Silver, "Setting the Crooked Straight," 2.
[27] John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1849).
[28] John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: Vol. 1-3* (London: Smith, Elder, and Co., 1851-3).
[29] Silver, "Setting the Crooked Straight," 2.

A focused eclecticism defined Morris' professional career, his partaking of many artistic trades, including, drawing, glasswork, pottery, woodwork, textiles, prose, and poetry, done with skill and care. Beyond his dedication to handicrafts, Morris was at heart a preservationist. Having grown up during the most intense years of the Industrial Revolution in England, Morris witnessed the often destructive side of the Victorian idea of progress. The demolition of historic buildings, which in many cases saw entire city centres or neighbourhoods razed for the placement of a new factory, or fashionable High Street commercial district, was contrary to everything for which Morris stood. In 1877, Morris, along with a group of like-minded artists, architects, philosophers, and writers, including, Thomas Carlyle [1795-1881], John Ruskin, Edward Coley Burne-Jones [1833-1898], and Philip Webb, founded the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings [SPAB].[30] Known as "Anti-Scrape," the new group championed the cause of Britain's architectural heritage, cataloguing buildings of historic value, and working to save threatened structures. Morris was so dedicated to this cause that he went as far as to turn down requests for highly lucrative commissions such as the replacement, and in his view the wanton destruction, of massive stained glass windows for medieval churches.[31] Preservation, tied to a strong sense of history, tradition, and place, was one of Morris' core principles of design – one which he shared with the Arts and Crafts Movement.

At the same time that Morris was fighting to educate the public about the necessity of respecting and preserving Britain's architectural past, he became increasingly concerned with the potential loss of cultural and craft traditions not only of his native land, but of the many far-flung cultures of the British Empire. Colonialism had, in

[30] Ibid, 11.
[31] Ibid.

Morris' estimation, been at the heart of the rapid destruction of the cultures and craft traditions of Britain's many colonies and trade partners.[32] With the advent of the factory and mass-production, Britain was now threatening to put out of business the foreign markets whose high-quality, exotic goods had become popular with the British consumer. Mass-produced by unskilled factory hands, local reproductions were inferior to handmade originals, yet because the craftspeople in India or China could no longer compete, the skills necessary to make the superior, traditional goods were falling away.[33] Morris was highly critical of what he perceived to be the ravages of modern, scientific, technological progress, representing a destructive force that laid waste to every culture it touched:

> [N]o country is safe from its ravages: the traditions of a thousand years fall before it in a month; [...] the Indian or Javanese craftsman may no longer ply his craft leisurely, working a few hours a day, in producing a maze of strange beauty on a piece of cloth: a steam-engine is set a-going in Manchester, and that victory over Nature [...] is used for the base work of producing a sort of plaster of china-clay and shoddy, and the Asiatic worker, if he is not starved to death outright [...] is driven himself into a factory to lower the wages of his Manchester brother worker, and nothing of character is left him except [...] an accumulation of fear and hatred of his English master.[34]

Such a system showed disrespect for the craft traditions of foreign cultures, while mass-production and cultural appropriation were mutually harmful to foreign and domestic workers. Indian or Chinese craftsman were robbed of their culture and means of survival, while at home British factory workers had become unskilled grunts, forced to relinquish control of the means of production. For Morris, this was unacceptable.

When Morris discovered Marx in 1883, the former had just reached his creative and financial apogee, while the latter had just died. A late-comer to Marxism, Morris was nonetheless an early adopter among his social set. Morris saw much to admire in Marx's views, including his critique of the capitalist system and its tendency to deskill workers

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[32] Ibid, 12.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.

through the division of labour, as well as to alienate the worker from his trade and thereby hinder his social realization and self worth.[35] Morris saw as well, in Marx's ideas, the strong respect for historicism and the old way of doing things, beliefs that he had held before reading *Das Kapital*.[36] Morris shared with Marx his belief that the Middle Ages had been, in many ways, a sort of golden age – at least for skilled labour – in which a strong sense of worker pride, as well as identity through one's trade and membership within the Guild system, had combined to create an ideal, pre-capitalist world view.[37] Morris' newfound philosophy did not make him popular with his friends and colleagues. In the aftermath of his coming out as a socialist, Morris found himself alienated, with only a small handful of his colleagues, including Phillip Webb, and a few new acquaintances, Walter Crane [1845-1915], Emery Walker [1851-1933], and T.J. Cobden-Sanderson [1840-1922] among them.[38] Even his wife, Jane, could not bare the embarrassment of being married to a radical. It was this struggle, perhaps more than any other, that came to define Morris' relationship to the Arts and Crafts.

The search for what could be described as "real" experiences – in life, work, or nature – as the nineteenth century came to a close, largely mirrored the longings of thinkers like Morris, a desire he would have shared with the Romantics, Pre-Raphaelites, Marxists, and many fellow artisans of his day. Beyond Morris' socialism, many of his personal leanings, such as his respect for skilled labour, craft traditions, foreign cultures, fine work, and his disapproval of mass-production and cultural appropriation through imperialism, made Morris someone whose Arts and Crafts sensibilities were as pure as

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[35] Ibid, 13-4.
[36] Ibid, 14.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

they were unshakable in their belief in truth through design. However, this level of dedication to the "Cause" as it was known, placed Morris in many ways, in a difficult struggle, one which in his opinion left himself and Marx standing more or less alone against the world.[39] While industrialisation quickened with the rapid advancements of science and technology towards the end of the nineteenth century, Morris found that authenticity was becoming harder and harder to come by. Mass-produced goods, a generation of young people raised on city streets instead of the farm, and clouds spewing from every smokestack, steamship, and locomotive – blotting out the sun, poisoning the waters, and spoiling the countryside – were in Morris' estimation the beginning of the end for the pastoral life he cherished. In many ways, Morris' tie to the Cause was linked to his antimodernist beliefs. For Morris, the best solution for preservation, whether of craft traditions, skilled labour, medieval historicism, or reverence for ancient buildings, was to educate the public on their necessity and value, and to thereby halt the destructive nature of industrial, capitalist progress. However, though Marxism provided Morris with many solutions, the problem of progress and its ills was to prove an unstoppable force, leaving Morris disillusioned to the end of his days.[40]

While creating fine craftwork, speaking out against the destruction of ancient buildings, illuminating medieval manuscripts, and reading *Das Kapital*, were among his key tactics in the war against a changing world, Morris inevitably knew that his was a lost cause. In the last decade of his life, Morris turned increasingly to one last outlet in an effort to soothe his disillusionment – the publication of his own artistic and philosophical manifesto. During his final years, he published a sizeable collection of fantasy novels,

[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid, 14-5.

poems, and short stories. *News from Nowhere*[41][1890;1892], *The Story of the Glittering Plain*[42] [1890;1891], *The Wood Beyond the World*[43] [1894], *The Well at the World's End*[44] [1896], *Water of the Wondrous Isles*[45][1897], and others, often placed their characters in Morris' own, Marxist-inspired utopian vision, with the romanticized protagonists struggling against a world turned on its head by evil forces.[46] Fastidious in their attention to detail, these elaborate fantasies would have likely been appreciated by a very select audience. Out of this small pool of followers can be included William Butler Yeats [1865-1939], C.S. Lewis [1898-1963], and J.R.R. Tolkien [1892-1973], the latter two responsible for two of the most popular fantasy franchises of the postwar. From the Middle Ages to Middle Earth, the lineage of these complex, nuanced visions of fantasy owe their pedigree in large part to the disillusionment of the Arts and Crafts Movement's largest devotee. There would be no room for Hobbits in a world without Morris.

When William Morris died at the age of sixty-six in 1896, his doctor mused that the cause of death had been, quite simply, "being William Morris," he having lived the life of ten men.[47] In his lifetime, Morris had mastered every type of craft he could put his hands to, created more than six hundred designs, published more than two dozen volumes of poetry, romance, and non-fiction, and become a Marxist.[48] He was a complex individual, a human example of total design. His intellectual influence was felt for decades after his death, with William Morris societies cropping up in England, as well as in the United States and Canada. His multifaceted legacy was thus, in many ways, in the

[41] William Morris, *News from Nowhere* (London: Kelmscott Press, 1890;1892).
[42] William Morris, *The Story of the Glittering Plain* (London: Kelmscott Press, 1890;1891).
[43] William Morris, *The Wood Beyond the World* (London: Kelmscott Press, 1894).
[44] William Morris, *The Well at the World's End* (London: Kelmscott Press, 1896).
[45] William Morris, *Water of the Wondrous Isles* (London: Kelmscott Press, 1897).
[46] Silver, "Setting the Crooked Straight," 15.
[47] Ibid, 16.
[48] Ibid.

hands of those to whom the torch had been passed. Would Morris' love of socialism find a welcome home across the Atlantic? Could the rapidly industrialising United States find enough common ground with Morris' fascination with medievalist-inspired ideals of design and craftsmanship? And in Canada, newly confederated as a nation within Morris' lifetime, would there be anyone receptive to the ideas of someone who placed so much merit on history? The question to be explored next, will thus be how the traditionalist and nationalistic aesthetic, and philosophical idealism of the Arts and Crafts Movement were interpreted by North American antimodernists at the turn of the last century. Both desirous in their own ways of affirming to themselves and the world their national identity and global status through a show of political and cultural positioning and display, the unfolding of the Arts and Crafts Movement in the United States and Canada took root and grew in their own, informative ways.

Getting the Wires Crossed: The Arts and Crafts Movement Comes to America

In the midst of waves of immigration to the United States towards the end of the nineteenth century, and paired with the torrent of new ideas that came with it, the Arts and Crafts Movement trickled in as an undercurrent of antimodernism propelled with just enough force to erode the sharp edges of modernism that had begun to take shape. The ideals and philosophies of Britons such as Ruskin and Morris at first influenced only a few like-minded individuals before being examined, debated, altered, and then disseminated among the public. 1897 marked an important year for the Arts and Crafts Movement in the United States. In that year, both the Boston Society of Arts and Crafts and the Chicago Arts and Crafts Society were founded, the latter spawning both the Industrial Art League in 1899, and the nation's first Morris Society in 1903. However, it

was not long after the founding of these and other similar craft organizations in America, that their Morris-inspired ideals fell prey to capitalist greed and an increasing sense of ennui in the face of what seemed to be the unstoppable march of industrial progress.[49]

While Morris' disillusionment with the modern world manifested itself through his quest for truth and authenticity in craftsmanship, preservation, and later, through fantasy, in the United States, the parallel to this longing for a simpler time was manifested in what has since been defined as the Cult of the Real. Known at the time as the Simple Lifers, societies of antimodernists were concerned above all with seeking out authentic, "real life" experiences, usually through a subsistence-based, often communitarian, agrarian lifestyle.[50] In the United States, organizations such as the Simple Lifers were joined by others, many of whom could be counted among artisans and craftspeople, who shared a belief in living simply, doing hard work, and surviving solely off the fruits of their skilled labour. Positioned as an alternative to industry, city life, and the artificiality of modern products and desires, the quest for reality, or authentic experiences, was a central tenet of those seeking a simpler, more real existence.

In many ways, it can be argued that the Arts and Crafts Movement mirrored this desire for authenticity, its emphasis on truth in design and upon quality materials and craftsmanship aligning its own values with those found within the Cult of the Real. According to Lears, however, although the quest for authenticity may have seemed at first to mesh well with the beliefs and practices of many American craft leaders, the shadow of republican moralism, in which American civilization was deemed to have reached a tipping point of overcivilization, was ever-present, obscuring any further

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[49] T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981), 64.
[50] Ibid, 63.

insights from view.[51] Lears views Gustav Stickley, master craftsman, founder of the United Crafts furniture workshop in Syracuse [1898], and editor of *The Craftsman* [1901-1916], as an example of how American craft leaders' concerns about authenticity were moulded by republican moralism.[52] At the outset, much like his fellow craft leaders, Stickley used *The Craftsman* to expound upon the virtues of Morris and Ruskin, in the early years challenging the factory system, the deskilling of labour, and poor working conditions, while lamenting the damage it wrought upon craftsmanship and the production of quality goods.[53] Lears suggests that while Stickley and other craft leaders were naturally prepared to accept the ideas of Morris and Ruskin, they were equally predisposed to reinterpret the message, "the attitude of the Americans stemm[ing] from their immediate historical situation and from [their] venerable cultural inheritance."[54]

Authenticity, or more accurately, the quest for authentic, real life experiences, manifested itself among American craft leaders, such as Stickley and Chicago-based social activist Jane Addams [1860-1935], in the form of class-segregated, practical education. A departure from Morris, who believed that skilled work would naturally lead to the worker taking pride in their labour, the American craft philosophy espoused the assumption that all work was inevitably joyless, thereby relegating antiquated skilled labour pursuits as something best suited to the realm of the therapeutic.[55] This belief was soon set into practice. Stickley's Craftsman School for Citizenship (tuition set at $1000/year), and Jane Addams' Museum of Labor, and her series of craftwork night

[51] Ibid, 68.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid, 82.

classes for women, reached interested patrons from every part of the social spectrum.[56] Among the rich, those in step with Stickley believed that wealthy Americans had grown soft, deprived of the rough, hardy, log-cabin upbringing of the nation's noble pioneer stock. Medical experts and psychologists were convinced that without the proper stimulation of real experiences, the upcoming generation of effete, over-civilized city dwellers were susceptible to neurasthenia, a nervous condition very much a product of its time, with a wide host of worrisome symptoms.[57] Perilously over-civilized, the middle and upper classes were in danger of succumbing to an illness of their own making, the only prescription strong enough to ward off the spectre of modern life, being a therapeutic – albeit periodic – retreat into the perceived authenticity of the past.

In *Twenty Years at Hull-House* [1910], Jane Addams reflected on her views on labour, poverty, and immigration, her many years alongside co-founder Ellen Gates Starr [1859-1940] at Hull House in Chicago defined in large part by her desire to shepherd those at the margins of American society into the mainstream through a mix of education, training, and respect, that in her view had been hitherto lacking. Buried in an anecdote about a group of old Russian women delighted to discover a working Russian spinning frame at the Hull House Labor Museum, Addams' contention that "culture is an understanding of the long-established occupations and thoughts of men, of the arts with which they have solaced their toil,"[58] echoes the essence of her early beliefs on the cultural value of craft traditions. Similar to Stickley, Addams' initial praise for Morris' wisdom regarding the ills of factory life and the detriments to the body and spirit of the deskilled worker, eventually began to shift. Writing on socialized education, Addams

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).
[58] Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull-House* (New York: Signet Classics, 1961), 159.

demonstrated a respect for the arts and sciences as a tool for cultural enrichment, qualified however, by her belief in the powers of practical and technical education and its ability to encourage worker satisfaction through a more intimate understanding of the value of their labour – no matter how thankless and repetitive it may seem.[59]

At first glance, the suggestion that the job of a worker who shovels coal is just as, if not more important than that of a skilled craftsman, could appear to contain a socialist bent. However, this philosophy was nothing more than a thinly veiled accommodation of the capitalist, consumer society that Addams and others believed to be inevitable.[60] In the name of authentic experience, the upper and middle classes – or bourgeoisie – were to find relief from the over-civilized, modern world by engaging in therapeutic, soul-searching exercises involving rigorous, recreational arts and crafts, while for the working poor, manual training in preparation for a life of specialized toil was meant to keep the working class – or proletariat – content in their proper sphere. While a life of leisure could drive one to distraction, a life of backbreaking misery could lead to the dangers of socialism. Considered from the viewpoint of cultural hegemony theory, including the traditional Marxist view, alongside the expanded definition by Antonio Gramsci,[61] the efforts of the dominant, or professional class to exert their beliefs and values surrounding the moral efficacy of hard work upon the working class had significant ramifications for the Arts and Crafts Movement. Early on supplied with a subversive, grassroots bent, as established by its British founders, the swift uptake of the Craft ideal among middle-class professionals in a position to purchase, commission, and personally benefit from its

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[59] Ibid, 286-8.
[60] Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 82.
[61] For an overview of Gramsci's [1891-1937] views on socialism, labour theory, and cultural hegemony, see Volumes 1 & 2 (self-published following his release from prison between 1929 and 1935) of: Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

fashionable wares, resulted in the rapid devolution of the Arts and Crafts from a Movement to a style. Thus in the United States, within the space of a decade, Morris' original idealism was all but stamped out, the craft leaders and manufacturers responsible for its commercial success having deftly bent its once subversive nature to their will.

Before long, the power of the free market to place a price on craftsmanship and quality took its toll on the material side of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. Bolstered by a collective shift in attitudes from craft leaders and cultural leaders, including Stickley, Addams, and others, the American consumer public was led to believe that instead of a widespread failure in the modern capitalist system, that the main cause behind worker unrest and poor workmanship, was the poor attitude of the worker, not factory owners, who were most to blame. Meanwhile, for those in the middle and upper classes, a general sense of ennui in the face of over-civilization, unreality, and discontentment, had taken root, the best cure for the neuresthenically-inclined being a hardy dose of manual labour. Priced out of the market for top-quality, handmade wares, and thereby cut off from their purported benefits, the working class were left to toil in factories while the rich were able to take pride in the exclusive products of the Arts and Crafts Movement, content in their belief that as consumers, they were at the very least helping the working poor attain happiness through employment. Elevated to the status of rarefied objets d'art, Stickley furniture, Tiffany glass, and custom-built homes, soon became the exclusive purview of the wealthy, inferior machine-made reproductions left to placate the masses. Introduced early on to the assembly line efficiency of scientific management as espoused by Henry Ford [1863-1947] and Frederick W. Taylor [1856-

1915],[62] the idealism of the Arts and Crafts – shortened in the United States to "Craftsman" – was remade, its American debut defined by its quick corruptibility.

The quest for reality led its pursuers from antimodernist protest to modern consumerism. The Movement nevertheless lived on in altered form until well into the interwar period. The Craftsman-inspired, California Bungalow remained the favoured domestic form for decades, the arrival of new construction technologies and architectural forms in the 1920s, helping bring the many styles derived from the Movement into the mainstream. While Tiffany glass and jewellery continue to this day to be highly sought-after items of home and personal decoration, and an original Stickley armchair or desk can fetch tens of thousands of dollars at high-end auctions, there has remained a strong market for everyday items of Craftsman origin that has kept pace with design trends for more than a century. What changed for the American Arts and Crafts Movement was not its style, or even its material palette, but the method in which these goods were produced – the art remaining intact, while the craft was largely altered. However, while all of these factors were largely responsible for the rapid Americanization of the original British Arts and Crafts Movement, it is the contention of this study that one additional factor was equally central to this process – the influence of American Exceptionalism.

Frederick Jackson Turner's [1861-1932] address made at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," laid out the blueprints for what it meant to be American.[63] While the current discussion will not go into detail, what remains relevant to the purpose of this study is the

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[62] Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
[63] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *The Annual Report of the American Historical Association* (1893): 199-227.

notion expressed by Turner that it was westward expansion and a thirst for land that had shaped the national character. With the frontier now closed, as it had become in 1890, and with no more open lands to claim and settle, Turner warned that there was a need for a more critical inward turn to the state of America's cities great and small. Demographic patterns in the United States and Canada during the end of the nineteenth century reveal a population that was becoming more urban. Hence, the relevancy of the Frontier, losing out to the rise of the city, served to redirect one's gaze inward, the demarcation point of civilization no more remote than the picket fences of the North American suburb.

In terms of the unfolding of the American Arts and Crafts Movement, the notion of American Exceptionalism played an important role in the break away from the Movement's British origins. A strong sense of anti-intellectualism, as identified by Turner as a reaction against the importation of European aristocratic ideas, quickly infiltrated, corrupted, and shaped the American Craft ideal. The belief in modernity, too, was perceived to be uniquely American. Transformed into a nation of consumers, as per the ideas set forth by William Leach[64] and Lizabeth Cohen,[65] the twentieth century ushered in an era of mass consumerism that through the powers of modern marketing soon aligned itself to broader notions of citizenship. Advertised to the public as the best means to fit in and participate in the American Dream, consumer products from razors to automobiles, televisions to entire homes, were sold as the best method by which to declare one's status and participatory role within mainstream culture. The Arts and Crafts Movement in the United States was caught in the crossfire of a nation on the cusp of a

[64] William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993).
[65] Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Vintage Books, 2003).

profound transformation, its rise to international power fuelled in large part by a self-sustaining engine of consumption, the success of which was determined by the desires – and changing fortunes – of the American consumer.

Nationalism, Identity, and the Creation of the Canadian Craft Ideal

Reachable within a day's travel by train from either Boston, Chicago, or Upper New York State, the centres of the American Arts and Crafts Movement were in close proximity to Montreal and Toronto – Canada's two largest cities. Five hundred kilometres north of Boston, the port city of Montreal had enjoyed much contact with both the Old World and many American cities along the North-Eastern seaboard. Further inland, Toronto was connected by rail to the Midwestern United States through Detroit and via Buffalo to the East. Primarily British-Canadian and well-to-do, Toronto's middle and upper classes were, by 1900, in a position to build new suburban homes and fill them with expensive furnishings, at issue being whether to import from Britain, the United States, or to buy local. Similarly in Montreal, the wealthy mix of well-established British- and French-Canadian professionals centred around the west side of the city, were experiencing an ascent into comfortable, middle-class life similar to their counterparts in Ontario. Across the Rocky Mountains, British Columbia was connected by rail in the mid-1880s to the rest of Canada and the United States, though its urban populations remained removed by geography, climate, and cultural orientation from Canada's larger urban centres in the East. Though predominantly of British origin, the settlers of these westernmost Canadian cities were more inclined to think locally, hire locally, and purchase home-grown products over imports owing to the exceptional costs of bringing goods over the Rockies and across the Pacific.

Regional differences aside, the purchasing power of the nation's urban elite was placed in the precarious position of having to choose between patronizing British, American, or local markets. For the Arts and Crafts Movement, this allowed for a uniquely Canadian experience with the Craft ideal to develop. The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement arrived at a complex moment in Canada' history, unfolding between the 1890s and the onset of the Second World War, in a handful of major urban centres, within clubhouses, studios, classrooms, and department store windows. Centred within the cultural spheres of influence amid Canada's well-established urban elite, the Movement arrived at a moment when the questions of the day included debates over education, professional training, trade tariffs, and protectionism, the thorny question of Canadian nationalism and identity most often laying just below the surface.

Published in 1891, British-Canadian writer, journalist, and controversialist, [66] Goldwin Smith's *Canada and the Canadian Question*, captured the spirit of a nation whose future was viewed by many to be uncertain owing to its perceived lack of purpose and identity. Exaggerated for effect, Smith's attention to detail and frank descriptions of Canadian geography, climate, urban and rural spaces, art, architecture, and culture, provide a curated glimpse into Victorian Canada. Framed from the outset as a "political expression,"[67] the idea of Canada, more than its physical, legal definitions, was of central importance to Smith, Canada's quest for identity and a sense of purpose, whether political, economical, or cultural, to be the work of generations to come. On the topic of Canadian culture, in particular within the realm of literature, Smith opined that because of Canada's great size, paired with a sparse population, that to "expect a national literature

[66] Ramsay Cook, "Smith, Goldwin," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 13, University of Toronto, 1994, accessed July 21, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/smith_goldwin_13E.html
[67] Goldwin Smith, *Canada and the Canadian Question* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1891), 48.

is [...] unfair."[68] Though great writers and poets hailed from every corner of the Dominion, they were cut off, either by distance or trade barriers to the cosmopolitan centres of the United States or Britain, while those in Montreal or Toronto were met at home with an insufficient number of cultured elite to whom to sell their work.[69] Accordingly, Smith's views on the possibilities of Canadian art, and in particular the variety of landscape art that had then begun to gain international acclaim, were slim, the success of a national art form once again to be likely curtailed by a lack of local patrons.[70] More challenging still, "because art requires models," and Canada was said to be lacking in the "finished loveliness of England,"[71] a successful national art tradition would have to rely not upon the "historic and picturesque buildings" of the motherland, but would have to turn instead to a landscape devoid of "historic or human interest."[72]

Anticipating the Group of Seven by a quarter-century, Smith's vision of a national brand of landscape art finding success while other artistic mediums and subjects fell on deaf ears, served to predict the ascendancy of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. Making brief mention of the urban landscape, of the "rows of trees planted along all the streets and the trim little lawns [that were] proof of refinement which cannot fail to please,"[73] among the newest residential neighbourhoods of Toronto, Smith admitted that hints of the picturesque were here and there to be found within Canadian cities, even if for the time being these tidbits of tastefulness remained largely aspirational. By referring

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Eden Smith's Anglo-centrism was mirrored by many of his peers in Toronto, and much of English-speaking Canada at this time. By contrast, Nobbs' willingness to embrace certain aspects of French Canadian heritage can be understood as unusual. To this end, Indigenous history and culture was all but ignored by the vast majority of white Canadian cultural leaders.
[72] Goldwin Smith, *Canada and the Canadian Question*, 48-50.
[73] Ibid.

directly to the picturesque rows of new homes found within urban Canada, Smith's praise for the pleasing effects of the nascent middle-class housing boom locates the author within the heart of the Arts and Crafts phenomenon and the Movement's urban-suburban epicentre. Moreover, in viewing the vastness of Canada as a blank slate, contemporary commentators agreed that whatever shape Canada assumed in the coming century, it would be up to the dominant classes – the English, and for the time being, the French – to ensure that Canada took on a form that was pleasing not only to the eye, but to the larger cultural, political, and nationalistic goals of the newly confederated country.

Begun soon after Confederation by the Canada Firsters, and revisited by those looking to the twentieth century in anticipation of Canada's rise to greatness as an Anglo-Saxon powerhouse made hardy and resourceful by the invigorating, northern climate, the conversation about English-Canadian nationalism was never far from centre stage.[74] With the possible exception of French Canada, whose shared experience with English Canada was often supported by arguments about climate and race, Berger states that for many Anglo-Canadian commentators at the turn of the last century, it was predicted to be only a matter of time before a united Canada would be known to the world.[75] Indeed, citing a long history of climate apologists dating to the mid-nineteenth century, Berger's assertion of what was once broadly accepted by many English Canadians to be the resultant Canadian character, fits well within the rhetoric espoused by several of Canada's leading Arts and Crafts figures, the Group of Seven, Eden Smith, and Percy Nobbs among them.

Aligned with a view of Anglo-Canadian nationalism that at best can be said to have tolerated French Canada within what was understood as a common history of

[74] Berger, *Sense of Power*, 129.
[75] Ibid.

survival, those at the centre of English Canada's cultural milieu sought to promote a vision of Canada that was directly beneficial to the production and sale of their wares. Chameleonic in its adaptive, regionalized nationalism, the Movement was able to capture the imaginations of artists, architects, and craftspeople in every province, the Vancouver, Toronto, or Montreal consumer all equally desirous of a custom piece of handcrafted Canadiana. In the creation of homes especially, Canada's domestic, architectural makeup was shaped to a significant degree by the twin forces of Anglo-Canadian nationalism and craft idealism that had quickly become a central part of modern, middle-class life for the majority of urban Canada.

Beyond architecture, though today as then this remains the medium to which the largest cultural markers of the era were realized, a diverse collection of Arts and Crafts associations, clubs, and organizations sprang to life, each in their own way determined to spread the Craft ideal to their fellow man – or woman – through their trade. To this end, the emergence of the Ontario Society of Artists [Toronto, 1872], Ontario Association of Architects [Toronto, 1889], Province of Quebec Association of Architects [Montreal, 1890], Vancouver Arts and Crafts Association [Vancouver, 1900], Arts and Crafts Society of Canada [Toronto, 1904], Canadian Handicrafts Guild [Montreal, 1906], Arts and Letters Club [Toronto, 1908], Vancouver Island Arts and Crafts Society [Victoria, 1909], Architectural Institute of British Columbia [Vancouver, 1920], and a host of others dedicated variously to the arts, crafts, or architecture, were formed across Canada around the turn of the last century. Interconnected with a great deal of cross-pollination, both of members, ideas, and joint exhibitions, Canada's cultural elite within the arts community, albeit regionalized by geography, remained close knit within the spheres of influence

centred broadly within Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia. Predominantly white, Anglo-Saxon, and male, with a few exceptions made for French Canadians, the all-female Canadian Handicrafts Guild, mixed company Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and a few others, Canada's creative class reflected the power and privilege enjoyed at the time almost exclusively by the urban, male, cultural elite of English Canada.

Well-connected and often well-established, the members of the aforementioned organizations represented the interests of middle- and upper-class English Canada, their creative powers closely aligned to the promotion of a Canadian national identity that hinged greatly upon an Anglo-centric world view. While not as overtly nationalistic or imperialistic as the Empire Club of Canada [Toronto, 1903], owing to the comparatively abstract nature of their focus, their respective manifestos echoed many of the same ideas, especially in respect to the desire among many Canadians to secure a national form of art, craft, and architecture. The subject of later chapters in this dissertation, the role of these and other similar associations went a significant way towards shaping the national conversation on what, beyond a common allegiance to King and Country, could be said to make Canada a cultural entity in its own right, separate and apart from Britain or the United States. Leading the charge, those among the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement's architectural division remained at the forefront of thought on the direction Canada ought to take in terms of modernity, craftsmanship, and design, the so-called "masters of all the arts"[76] settling comfortably into their role as arbiters of good taste.

Canada's Arts and Crafts Masters: Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and Samuel Maclure

Eden Smith, 1858-1949

[76] William Richard Lethaby, "Arts and the Function of Guilds," *The Quest* 1, no. 6 (July 1896).

Among his Canadian contemporaries, Eden Smith represents the strongest adherent to the Arts and Crafts Movement, his firm belief in its philosophies and aesthetic guidelines forming the basis of his thirty-year career. Born in the industrial town of Birmingham, England in 1858 as the son of a builder, Smith's formative years were spent under the guidance of a craftsman, while growing up in the midst of the Second Industrial Revolution.[77] Receiving a middle-class education, Smith became interested in art and architecture while in school, eventually attending the Birmingham School of Art, and becoming a member of various local architects' associations. During this time, Smith was exposed to the teachings of William Morris, who guest-lectured at the Birmingham School of Art on more than a dozen occasions. By 1887, Smith and his wife had settled in Toronto after an unsuccessful stint as a homesteader in Manitoba the year before.[78] Smith was also an important part of the Canadian side of the intellectual debate among architects over the question of professionalization. To this end, Smith was highly vocal in his views on architectural education and training, his many published diatribes on the state of the Canadian architectural profession aligning him with those who maintained that architecture was an open art as opposed to a closed profession, an alliance that held true to the principles of William Morris, Philip Webb, and Norman Shaw [1831-1912].[79]

A founding member of the Toronto Architectural Eighteen Club [1899], which fought against the designs of the OAA in the hopes of keeping the practice of architecture open to the public, Smith was a dedicated devotee to his Arts and Crafts principles.

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[77] W. Douglas Brown, *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect* (Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003), 2.
[78] Ibid, 3.
[79] Eden Smith, "Architectural Education – 1900," *CAB* 13, no. 6 (June 1900): 109, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm (Paper read before the Architectural League of America in the aftermath of the 12th Annual OAA Convention).

Figure 1.3 Eden Smith [1858-1949]. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga, ON: 2003.

Declaring early on a reverence for William Lethaby [1857-1931] – a British Arts and Crafts architect and colleague of Morris, Webb, and Shaw – Smith's citing of Lethaby's view that "the practice of architecture has become 'the harmonious association of all the crafts,'"[80] underlined Smith's allegiance not only to the Craft ideal but to the larger forces of antimodernism that helped inform his world view. Within such a framework, the value of the Medieval Guild system of education, apprenticeship, and training was not to be taken lightly, their time-tested methods, though anachronistic by Smith's day, to be given a careful second look.[81] Brought into practice, Smith's distinctive brand of English-tinted antimodernism was incorporated into his varied Canadian oeuvre, his private homes in particular, signalling the arrival to urban Canada of a new domestic form.[82]

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Annmarie Adams, "Eden Smith and the Canadian Domestic Revival," *Urban History Review*, 21, no. 2 (March 1993): 104-115.

Figure 1.4 267 Indian Road [1896] in Toronto. Smith's High Park home is the earliest of his work in Toronto. Featuring many of Smith's trademark Arts and Crafts design cues, including irregular massing, the use of natural materials, and ample sunlight, the home's vernacular, "English Cottage" character is tempered by a host of modern idiosyncrasies, thus placing it between two worlds. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga, ON: 2003.

It was in Smith's keen ability to bridge the architectural philosophies and practices of the Old World to the New, to not only import, but to significantly build upon and reinterpret for the Canadian climate, geography, and marketplace, the core values of the British Arts and Crafts tradition to an entirely new land, people, and home, that the architect's creativity can be best understood. Working within a narrow band, balanced between a clientele accustomed to English traditions yet demanding of the latest in modern Canadian, domestic comfort and style, Smith's ability to create something new

yet familiar, spoke equally of his skill as an architect as it did a businessman.[83] Moreover, Smith's balancing act spoke loudest of his responsiveness to the twin calls of antimodernism and British-Canadian nationalism that informed his ideas and those of many of his colleagues within the OAA, Eighteen Club, and Arts and Letters Club.

In terms of the English-born Smith's credentials as a Canadian architect, striving throughout his long career to solve the problems of how best to proceed with all matters related to building for Canada a style of its own while remaining true to its heritage, his work can be best understood within the context of his words. Provided with a three-part series dedicated to the Canadian home within the first volume of *Maclean's* following its rebranding from *The Busy Man's Magazine*, the popular magazine gave Smith a rare opportunity to be heard nationwide. No longer writing solely for the architectural trade, Smith's first and longest piece captures the essence of the architect's philosophy of design, along with his views on domesticity and homebuilding within the Canadian context. Beginning with a monochromatic woodblock illustration of a lonely cabin in the wintry Canadian wilderness, signed "FJ," which given Smith's connections through the Arts and Letters Club could very well be shorthand for future Group of Seven member Frank Johnston, "Canadian House Architecture," sets out to place the reader at Smith's side as he forges a path to civilization through architecture. Described as a reflection of the self, architecture, especially of the domestic variety, is said by Smith to be an artistic expression, "evidence of *himself* which the dweller in the house makes on that environment of *himself*, which he, more than any other, has the power to adjust."[84] Thus as Canadians, seeking the comforts of a modern home in a new land, one that according

[83] Ibid.
[84] Eden Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," *Maclean's Magazine*, March, 1911, 97-101.

to common contemporary wisdom was defined by its cold climate, open spaces, and hardy stock of British, French, and Canadian-born citizens,[85] it was expected that one's home would reflect the values, traditions, and practical requirements of their countrymen.

More than this, drawing a direct connection to Smith's deeply-rooted Arts and Crafts idealism, the discovery of beauty through function, skill, and good work, would unlock for the architect and homeowner a sense of joy in their craft. By "express[ing] a beautiful idea,"[86] whether of a certain form or function, and by doing so through the honest, simple purity of natural materials and the inherent aesthetic quality only they can produce, an architect as artist and builder could achieve beauty and satisfaction through craft. Finding pleasure in his work, the craftsman "desired to express it. He perceived beauty in the things about him and would make his work recall it. He sings at his work, for he has found something to sing of and his work must sing also."[87] Thus in the pursuit of architecture that sings, the architect had to create his melody with only the simplest, most honest expression of the natural beauty of his materials and from these take his cue and craft his composition. Lastly, as mimicry, in Smith's view, had long been a foil to Canadian creativity and inventiveness in architecture, it was of the utmost importance that ever an ear remained alerted to the easy allure of the fashionable falsettos and stylistic flights of fancy that threatened to distract from the main melody.[88] Canada, Canadians, and Candianness, were therefore of central importance in his view to the creation of a national architectural tradition. The complementary pairing of the natural

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[85] For more on contemporary historical views of "Canadianess," see: Goldwin Smith, *Canada and the Canadian Question* (Toronto: Hunter, Rose and Co., 1891); and Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930).
[86] Eden Smith, "Canadian House Architecture, 97.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid, 97-8.

splendour and geographic realities of Canada, combined with that of the plurality of people that called it home, were to be reflected in their arts and crafts, their homes being no exception. However, as will be explored in the next chapter, it was Smith's belief that he shared with many of his colleagues and contemporaries – Professor Nobbs of McGill University among them – that before one could entertain the notion of a Canadian architectural tradition, the profession itself had to be cured of its many deficiencies, to say nothing of the state of architectural education.

The only one among himself, Nobbs, and Maclure to have witnessed the birth of the Arts and Crafts Movement firsthand, Smith's Birmingham upbringing placed the architect face to face with the horrors of the Industrial Revolution. Having seen the skies blackened by smog, and the streets shrouded in soot, Smith knew all too well the dangers of too readily applauding the advancements of the Industrial Age. Closer to William Morris both in upbringing and in spirit than many of his Canadian contemporaries, Eden Smith came to Canada almost as a refugee of the modern world, his flight to the Prairies made in pursuit of sunlight and fresh air. Settling for Toronto, however, placed him on the cusp of comfort, the ease with which he navigated the elite cultural circles in which he made his career, likely never quite feeling like home. For this reason, Smith would relocate often, moving first to High Park, then to Wychwood, living out his last years on his son's farm outside of Guelph. Primed from an early age with a predilection for fantasy, Smith is reported to have gone to great lengths to curate his self-image, the details of his life, his parentage, and even his real name and exact age, remaining a mystery even to those who knew him best, including his family.[89] For Smith, it would appear that the search for truth through artistic expression was the driving force that kept

[89] Adams, "Eden Smith and the Canadian Domestic Revival," 108-9.

the fight for craftsmanship, artistry, and material honesty alive, the entirety of his career in Canada defined by a desire to be heard, accepted, and understood.

Percy Erskine Nobbs, 1875-1964

In 1903, Percy Erskine Nobbs became the second MacDonald Professor of Architecture and Director of the Department of Architecture at McGill University. Having arrived in Montreal that September from his native Scotland, the twenty-eight year old architect wasted little time in forming strong opinions about the state of the city's architecture. According to Nobbs, Montreal contained, "a few really good buildings and a few exceedingly beautiful ones [...] the average structure fronting her streets [...] neither good nor beautiful – rarely sensible."[90] Nobbs lamented the poor taste found among the anonymous tracts of over-ornate High Victorian row houses common throughout the city. He regarded these "enormities in wood work" and "crimes in zinc," a testament to a troublesome over-reliance upon "material frauds – wood masquerading as stone, etc.," and a stylistic slavishness to fashion decried by Nobbs as the "caricaturing of Architecture."[91] Over the course of his long life and career, Nobbs was variously an architect, professor, urban planner, Olympic-level fencer, championship fisherman, naturalist, painter, and author of countless lectures and articles, his 1937 manuscript, *Design: a Treatise on the Discovery of Form*,[92] a tour de force of his scientific, evolutionary approach to architecture. Writing on all things architecture – including education, training, and the creation of a national building tradition – over a fifty year

[90] Percy E. Nobbs [Gargoyle], "Montreal Letter No. 1: Montreal in General," *CAB* 17, no. 4 (April 1904): 73, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[91] Ibid.
[92] Percy E. Nobbs, *Design: a Treatise on the Discovery of Form* (London: University of Oxford Press, 1937).

period spanning well into his retirement in the 1950s, Nobbs remained consistent in his views, the present state of Canadian architecture never far from his mind.

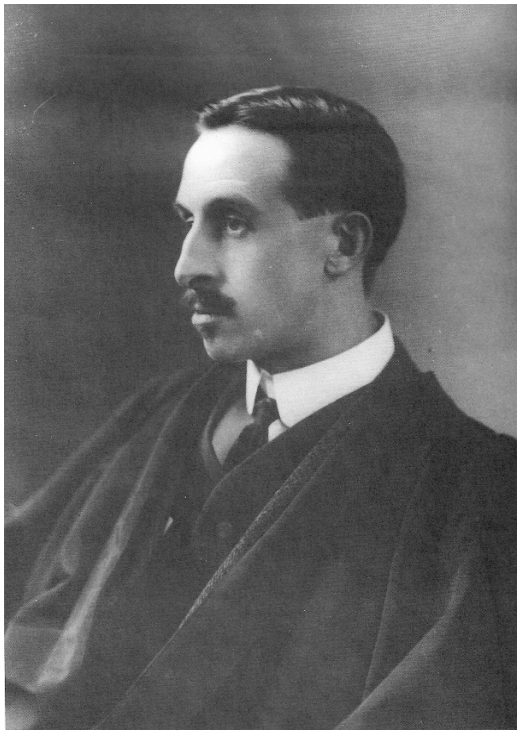

Figure 1.5 Percy Erskine Nobbs [1875-1964]. From Susan Wagg. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

Read by Nobbs before the OAA at their annual meeting in 1910, the visiting professor from McGill prefaced his paper with a warning of its "controversial [...] perhaps highly explosive matter," his words on "Architectural Education in Canada," more than likely to spark a spirited debate among his colleagues.[93] Gifted with a flair for the dramatic, Nobbs' many lectures and speeches, both at home and abroad, could often be counted upon to deliver their message with charisma and aplomb. Tame by Nobbs' standards, the potential controversy of the address lay not in the delivery, but the message. The professor's authoritative academic approach to architectural education and training, to be explored in the next chapter, was most critical of the conventional wisdom of the OAA regarding the methods by which the next generation of Canadian architects

[93] Percy E. Nobbs, "Architecture in Canada," *Proceedings of the OAA* 10 (1910): 81-7.

would become worthy of their hard-fought professional status.[94] On the subject of Canada, and of the desire to create a national style of architecture, Nobbs was careful not to put the cart before the horse. Cautioning throughout his career that education, training, and the passage of time were necessary to allow for a truly Canadian architectural tradition to bloom from amid a mix of French, English, and later cultural inheritances and influences both man-made and inspired by nature, Nobbs was a believer in the long game of architectural evolution, there being no short cuts to nationhood.[95]

Defining architecture as the "expression of sentiment in building," Nobbs believed that "pure design in nature and in art and ornament, with its moral or significant aspect and its material logic, throw light on the evolution of architectural form."[96] Speaking from the Canadian context, Nobbs continued on to the subject of architectural revivals, the long-held practice of building in the spirit and style of bygone eras and cultures described as an effort to express the fleeting significance of a certain period in a nation's history. For Canada at the outset of the twentieth century, which was currently in the midst of an English revival, the cultural selection at play was appropriate given the complexities of nationalism then at the centre of much debate. To this end, Nobbs argued that the current revival would have "more real meaning" to the nation today than at any other time.[97] Warning however, against pure imitation, Nobbs clarified and thereby limited his reverence for the current English revival then afoot in Canada, cautioning heavily against the fashionable excesses of mimicry found in "the physical details of

[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid, 83.
[97] Ibid, 84.

mullioned ranges of lights and parapeted roofs" that must be avoided at all cost.[98] Thus according to Nobbs, should there be any hope for the survival of the Canadian architectural profession and resultant national building tradition, "it must invent!"[99]

Putting his vision for Canada into words, Nobbs concluded his remarks with a resounding call to hone the essence of the Canadian architectural profession and building tradition along lines laid down by both Classical and Arts and Crafts-inspired means:

> Our architecture should be 'solid, proportional, according to the rules' (which means that effect should be calculated and not be accidental), 'masculine and unaffected.' That is how Inigo Jones put it, and 'built for eternity,' as Wren used to say. Our architecture should be logical to our climate and our materials as were the flat-pitched colonnaded fanes of Greece and the steep-roofed buttressed churches of England. It should be simple, natural, dignified, true to its purpose, whether cottage, house, shop, office, church or town hall; - a fruit of the glorious traditions we inherit from our fathers, with nothing of the 'insolent boast' and the 'slaves' nightmare' which Morris saw and fought against in the artificial art 'all French and fine' which hails from the place and period most away from all our aspirations – the court of Versailles.[100]

Referencing Inigo Jones [1573-1652] and Christopher Wren [1632-1723], two of Britain's most acclaimed architects of the Early Modern Period, alongside the more recent addition of William Morris, Nobbs traced an ancestral line from the heyday of English architecture to the present. In his many calls for truth and simplicity in design, Nobbs was able to ward off the evils of mimicry and over-ornamentation using his three carefully chosen examples as a shield against poor taste, while simultaneously aligning the burgeoning Canadian profession within the English architectural tradition. This being said, in order to fully understand Nobbs' vision for Canada, full due must be granted to his belief that "[Canada's] architecture [must be] logical to our climate and our materials."[101] These first two points always joined by a third – what Nobbs identified as

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[98] Ibid.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid, 87.
[101] Ibid.

Canada's pluralistic cultural inheritance – these three forces were consistently argued to be of central importance to the development of a national architectural tradition.

Figure 1.6 J. L. Todd Estate [1911-13] in Senneville, Quebec. The J. L. Todd Estate sits on a beautiful parcel of land, its Quebecois influences adding a great deal of cultural context and artistic whimsy to its stolid Arts and Crafts roots. From: Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

Speaking in London ahead of the 1924-5 British Empire Exhibition, as an honoured guest of the Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA], Nobbs' views on the importance of climate, materials, and cultural inheritance were brought to bear before a crowd of architects who had been treated to a slideshow exhibit of several dozen examples of Canadian architecture.[102] Adopting an almost apologetic tone, Nobbs began his remarks with an assurance that though "much of what is shown must appear strange to the English eye, and strangeness as an element of charm has very discreet limits," that the

[102] Percy E. Nobbs, "Architecture in Canada," *JRAIC* (July-September, 1924): 91-95. (Originally read before The Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA], London, on January 21, 1924).

selected examples of Canadian architecture were "fair samples of our varied best."[103] Covering a broad range of topics, Nobbs' words on the role of Canadian geography and climate are telling, the former described in terms of its vastness as an impediment to the creation of a cohesive national architecture, while the latter is labelled a "*force majeur*, that most potent agency for making a distinctive character in men and things – weather."[104] Going so far as to suggest that "at the moment Canadian architecture is a polite fiction," Nobbs' bleak appraisal was lifted to a large degree by his optimistic assurance that one need only "Give the north wind time!"[105] It would thus not be long, in Nobbs' estimation, before the varied harshness of the Canadian climate would eventually shape local traditions into something unique, resulting in the organic development of a distinctive breed of Canadian architecture. Hereby aligning himself to the Arts and Crafts Movement, in particular to the belief in the power of geography and climate to shape a nation's materiality, aesthetic, and architecture, Nobbs was also making the case for a national tradition that favoured natural materials and methods as a matter of practical necessity. In step with the many demands of the nascent Canadian architectural profession, which had for decades been struggling to carve out a market for its wares, the solution lay scattered at its feet, in the very trees, rocks, and soil of country.

Writing on Canadian architecture again in 1930, in a three-part series published in the *Journal Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* [*JRAIC*], broken down by theme into "The Inheritance,"[106] "Modernity,"[107] and "Adverse Influences."[108] Nobbs' words are

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[103] Ibid, 91.
[104] Ibid, 93.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Percy E. Nobbs, "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada: Part 1. The Inheritance," *JRAIC* 7, no. 7 (July 1930): 245-8.
[107] Percy E. Nobbs, "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada: Part 2. Modernity," *JRAIC* 7, no. 9 (September 1930): 314-7.

highly informative of his beliefs, consistent yet sharpening and evolving to speak to the challenges of the day. In "The Inheritance," Nobbs made clear the notion that the creation of a national style was not the sole duty of the architect, that in fact the "public has quite as much to do with the matter as they have."[109] Nobbs defined architecture as "the best means for recording the cultural and economic history of peoples," its effectiveness as an expression of nationhood [...] largely dependent upon a three-way relationship between the architect, client, and the public, architecture being the "most democratic of all the arts."[110] Nobbs described this delicate ménage à trois with characteristic aplomb:

> The client and architect cooperate as one artistic party to impress the other party, which is a public either limited or unlimited – a "chosen few" or the "common herd." It takes two to make love, and it takes two to achieve art, one to give, the other to receive. The architect and his client cooperate as the giver, and all mankind with eyes to see and hearts to beat may receive at will.

Nobbs credited Canada's early cultural inheritance to the French, who "brought to Canada the sound rustic building traditions of their native provinces where the inventiveness of Gothic inspiration had been dead for a century and the refinement of the courtly renaissance inspiration had as yet hardly penetrated."[111] Later influences were said to hail from England, "the words of William Morris in speaking of an earlier period [...] equally applied to [a] sturdy tradition in stone building."[112] Harmoniously combined, these two traditions, the "art of peasants rather than of the merchant princes or courtiers," had produced a dignified beauty of form and function that none, "whether a man [...] born

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[108] Percy E. Nobbs. "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada - Part III: Adverse Influences," *JRAIC* 7, no. 11 (November 1930): 388-92.
[109] Nobbs, "The Inheritance," 245.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid, 246.
[112] Ibid.

among it [or] come wonderingly on its simplicity from all the grandeur over seas, or over the border to the south," could do more than stand in admiration of its raw beauty.[113]

Here, it must be said that on his views regarding the cultural, and by extension, architectural history of Quebec, Nobbs was likely not immune to the popular historical narrative influenced in large part by American historian Francis Parkman [1823-1893], whose works included several series dedicated to the colonial conflicts between the English and the French. Setting a century-long standard of scholarship, especially among American audiences, Parkman's now debunked historical view of French Canada – along with the First Nations – as predestined to fail on account of their religious, political, and cultural inferiority to the British,[114] would have more than likely been one of Nobbs' first points of contact with the subject. Concluding his comments on the Conquest, Parkman underscored his view of English superiority in *The Old Regime in Canada* [1874]:

> England imposed by the sword on reluctant Canada the boon of rational and ordered liberty. Through centuries of striving she had advanced from stage to stage of progress, deliberate and calm, - never breaking with her past, but making each fresh gain the base of a new success, - enlarging popular liberties while bating nothing of that height and force of individual development which is the brain and heart of civilization; and now, through a hard-earned victory, she taught the conquered colony to share the blessings she had won. A happier calamity never befell a people than the conquest of Canada by the British arms.[115]

Such a view of historical events, framing as if did the fall of New France as a both a foregone conclusion and happy occurrence for all involved, served to place Quebec's rich cultural past in a vacuum, hermetically sealed in a time capsule labelled, "New France: 1534-1763." And though from Nobbs' writings it is evident that the architect held a great reverence for the centuries-old architectural traditions of New France, he, like many

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[113] Ibid.
[114] W. J. Eccles, "Parkman, Francis," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*. Vol. 12, Toronto: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1990, accessed July 21, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/parkman_francis_12E.html
[115] Francis Parkman, *The Old Regime in Canada* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1898), 468.

others of his time, often did so with a mythology-tinted understanding of the real life events and conflicts that had shaped the province and its people.

If Parkman's influence was not a significant factor in Nobbs' understanding and appreciation of Quebec's distinct cultural heritage and place within Canada's history, the celebrations and pageantry central to the Quebec Tercentenary in 1908, just five years after his arrival to McGill, would have likely left an impression. Described in detail by H. V. Nelles in his study dedicated to the event, the Quebec Tercentenary represented a watershed moment in Canadian commemoration and self-invention, the exuberant spectacle at its centre "nothing less than an attempt to interpret history before a mass audience in support of a particular vision of what Canada should and might become."[116] Replete with "princes, prime ministers, politicians, and prelates," placed on display alongside a host of "all the great 'isms' of the time (progressivism, liberalism, boosterism, feminism, nationalism in several varieties, imperialism, militarism, historicism, nativism, ultramontanism, racism, modernism, monarchism)," the Tercentenary celebrations left no stone unturned in the quest for nationhood and national identity.[117] Practising and teaching architecture in Montreal during the Tercentenary, Nobbs' early fascination with the cultural heritage of Old Quebec may have been amplified by its many fanciful depictions of the most dramatic set pieces of French-Canadian history designed to delight a broad audience. To this end, Nobbs' understanding and application of the precepts of the British Arts and Crafts Movement within the Canadian context, as demonstrated through his work in Quebec, reflected a mindset shaped by a romanticized interpretation of an imagined past.

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[116] H. V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 12.
[117] Ibid, 13.

Writing on "Modernity," – Nobbs' remarks on this and "Adverse Influences" to be revisited in Chapters Two and Three – the author once again made his allegiance to the Craft Movement known, his reverence for the old way of doing things brought to terms with a swiftly changing world.[118] Noting the rapid deterioration of craftsmanship, which had suffered greatly in the face of modern innovations, Nobbs implored his fellow architects to "keep our heads," to build in a way that was "natural, simple and unaffected, as our forefathers were, taking from the past what is applicable to the present, avoiding the temptation to do things thus and thus, simply for old sake's sake, yet doing things always in old ways, when they are also the best ways."[119] Laying out his own brand of what can be understood as practical antimodernism, Nobbs' call for authenticity mirrored Eden Smith's, its slightly more pliant nature owing likely in equal measure to the professor's privileged status as an academic, and to the benefits of a decades-long career. Allowing thus for the practical necessities of evolutionary advancement in regards to architectural progression, Nobbs' tacit approval of modernity within architecture came from a belief in its powers to heal, to demand more of its subject than simple historicism, and to thereby bring out the truth in design that he and his contemporaries – in Montreal, Toronto, and far across the Rockies in British Columbia – had long been searching.

Samuel Maclure, 1860-1929

In 1897, the Vancouver *World* ran a story on Samuel Maclure which boasted of the talents of the young, locally-born architect, describing him as a "British Columbian to the marrow bone."[120] Born in 1860 to Scottish parents in the pioneer environs of New Westminster, Maclure was destined to follow in his father's footsteps as a railway

[118] Nobbs, "Modernity," 314-7.
[119] Ibid, 314.
[120] "Samuel Maclure," *The World*, May 4, 1897.

telegraph operator.[121] Maclure's career path changed early on, however, when at the age of twenty-three, the aspiring artist headed east to attend the Spring Garden Art Institute in Philadelphia from 1883-1885. During his brief stint in the East, staying with his aunt, and splitting his free time between Philadelphia and New York, Maclure dug deep into his passion for art and architecture, the dizzying sights of the Eastern Seaboard offering more than enough inspiration for a lifetime of pursuing his love of design upon his return home in 1885.[122] Settling back into life in New Westminster, it was not long before the monotony of the telegraph wore thin, Maclure getting his first real start in architecture in 1890.[123] Content in his early years to have steady work, Maclure oversaw the construction of numerous Queen Anne, Tudor, and other English vernacular homes, his distinctive flair for materiality and aesthetic showing promise from the start. It was not until he moved to Victoria in 1892, however, that Maclure found his muse, the rolling hills of lush vegetation that lined the rocky Pacific Coast bringing out the best in him.[124]

Figure 1.7 Samuel Maclure [1860-1929]. Image courtesy of Sally Carter. From Bingham, Janet. *Samuel Maclure, Architect*. Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart, 1985.

[121] Janet Bingham, *Samuel Maclure: Architect* (Ganges: Horsdal & Schubert, 1985), 21.
[122] Ibid, 30-1.
[123] Ibid, 34.
[124] Ibid, 58.

Largely self-taught, with the exception of his fine arts education gained in Philadelphia, Maclure was an avid reader with a voracious appetite for learning. Doing his best to keep up to date with all of the latest trends and innovations to come out of the profession, Maclure is reported to have subscribed to a number of trade journals and popular periodicals, and kept a collection of the key writings of Arts and Crafts masters Ruskin, Voysey, Lutyens, Shaw, and Morris, in his personal library.[125] Highly evident in his work, Maclure's deep respect for the guiding principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement are easy to detect, his strong reliance upon natural materials, including timber, stone, and even local flora, having made their way into virtually all of his estimated 250 commissions. Spread across British Columbia, with a few reported outliers as far away as Washington State, California, Florida, and one confirmed home in Toronto's Rosedale, Maclure's impact upon the Canadian Pacific Coast was substantial.[126]

Inspired in equal parts by his architectural idols, as he was by the natural splendour of the Pacific Coast, Maclure created a style of his own, his distinctive "Maclure Bungalows" quickly becoming the envy of all fortunate enough live near one. So fashionable among his wealthy, expatriate British clientele, word of mouth spreading fast among the local circles of nouveau-riche lumber, coal, and railway barons, to say nothing of the recently arrived British gentry, naval commanders, and their wives, that according to Maclure's daughter Catherine, he could not escape his own reputation:

> Then he had a style of his own as well that came out even in the Tudor, and that became so popular that everyone wanted the same house. He rather wished they would let him do something of his own. But he did invent awfully nice bungalows and there were many copies of it all over Victoria. I see them to this day. And then the builders copied them.[127]

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[125] Ibid, 64-5.
[126] Ibid, 4.
[127] "Catherine Maclure," interview by Imbert Orchard, CBC, 1963, Tape 2, Track 1, pg. 11. Transcript of two audio cassettes, BC Archives Item No. AAAB0805.

Reportedly unbothered by his competitors' blatant borrowing of his original designs, Maclure is said to have been flattered by the attention, laughing at the thought of it.[128] Thus often requested to build for the next client a home that in some way resembled that of the last, it was not long before the de facto style of British Columbian high society was synonymous with Maclure, his creative mark upon the province noted by local heritage and preservation groups, tourism offices, and most of all, Maclure home owners.

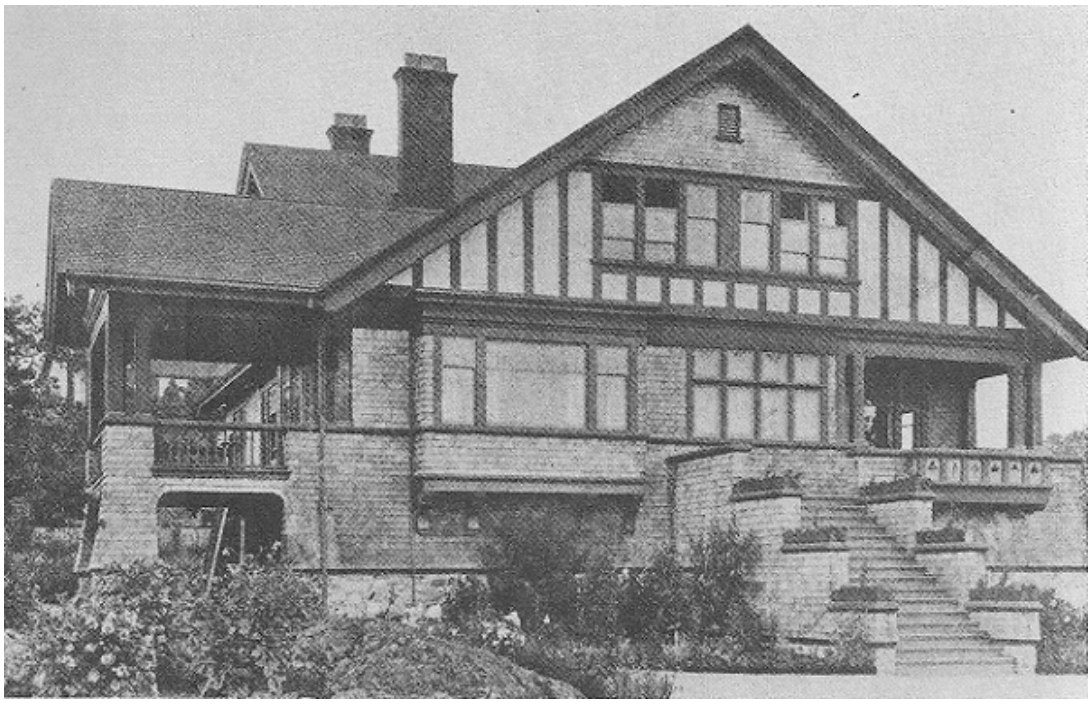

Figure 1.8 Exterior, Alexis Martin House [1904], located at 1598 Rockland Avenue in Victoria. A good example of Maclure's Craftsman style, with a low profile roofline and cedar shingles. Featured in *The Craftsman*, March, 1908; and *CAB* 22, no. 3 (1908): 12-15.

No great pontificator upon the concerns of the architectural profession of his day, at least by the metric of lectures, articles, and popular publications as made regular use of by his Central Canadian contemporaries, Maclure allowed his work to speak for him. Capturing the attention of Gustav Stickley, Maclure's work was featured in an illustrated, multi-page spread within *The Craftsman* in March, 1908, which was republished in the

[128] Ibid, 12.

CAB. "A House in Vancouver that Shows English Traditions Blended with the Frank Expression of Western Life," captured the raw talent and expression of artistic beauty through simplicity and natural materials that had come to define Maclure.[129] *The Craftsman* heaped praise upon his work, declaring the Victoria[130] home, "[a]n unusually interesting example of a house that is built of local materials and is absolutely suited to its environment, but which yet shows decided evidences of the tastes and traditions of another country."[131] The editor, likely Stickley himself, continued on to make the case that the home's breathtaking vistas, provided by the majestic coastal landscape, offered "an outlook sufficiently imposing to demand a breadth and dignity of style greater than that of dwellings situated in a country where the natural features are on a lesser scale."[132]

Hence, from the opening onwards, it was made abundantly clear by the editor that Maclure had succeeded in expressing the full gamut of Arts and Crafts design tenets as made popular in the United States by *The Craftsman*'s own Gustav Stickley. The home built at 1598 Rockland Drive, for Alexis Martin, featured many of Maclure's signature design elements, among them, an exterior which effortlessly blended natural materials such as fieldstone for the foundation, cedar shingles for the gables, and a cedar shake roof, to create a Craftsman-inspired home that rivalled the raw beauty of its extraordinary surroundings. The roughness of the exterior's natural materials are artfully subdued by the careful massing of the home, along with the adherence of the notably more American, Prairie School architectural layering of the home's three levels into identifiably different sections. The end result was a home that embraced the Craftsman ideal, while still, as the

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[129] "A House in Vancouver that Shows English Traditions Blended with the Frank Expression of Western Life," *The Craftsman*, March, 1908, 675-681.
[130] Up until the early twentieth century, it was common to refer to Vancouver Island simply as "Vancouver"
[131] "A House in Vancouver," 675.
[132] Ibid.

article's title suggested, maintaining the traditional tastes of its British-Canadian clientele and cultural setting. A nod towards the home's English character and context, the drawing room, decorated with, "purely English taste [...] the familiar plastered walls and white enameled woodwork, with furniture of polished mahogany, upholstered in green tapestry" [133] was of particular interest, adding to the home's innate, artistic qualities:

> The house has an air of home comfort and restfulness, which comes from the carrying out of a carefully considered and well-balanced scheme that includes planning furnishing and decorating. The blending of English taste with that which is characteristic of the architecture of our own Pacific Coast has an effect of quiet sumptuousness, combined with straightforward utility, that gives one the impression of a house that is to be lived in for generations and will remain as it is – a home for the children's children of its present owners.[134]

Figure 1.9 1598 Rockland Avenue [1904] in Victoria. The "English" Drawing Room is one of the few concessions made to a more feminine design aesthetic, its white enamelled walls and plush furniture a distinct break from the dark, masculine tones found throughout the rest of the house. From: *The Craftsman*, March, 1908.

Evoking a, "quiet sumptuousness, combined with straightforward utility," Maclure's design had evidently made quite the impression on the American master craftsman, its

[133] Ibid, 676.
[134] Ibid, 681.

timeless quality within a world irrevocably hastened by the demands of modern life, offering refuge as a salve to be applied against the ills of the twentieth century.[135]

Figure 1.10 1598 Rockland Avenue [1904] in Victoria. The dining room showcases a return to masculinity, the lack of decoration, paired with an emphasis upon utility, representative of Maclure's Arts and Crafts sensibility. From: *The Craftsman*, March, 1908.

Through outside observation, Stickley had located the heart and soul of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, of which Maclure was a master, underlined by a strong self-awareness, and reverence for tradition and nationalism expressed through art. The blending of culturally diverse architectural elements, materials, and vernacular styles, as achieved by Maclure and his Canadian contemporaries with skill and artistic tactfulness, served to carve out a new form of North American domestic architecture. Maclure's work was also an excellent example of what fellow Arts and Crafts architects would have understood as total, or complete design, the article alluding to this with its mentioning of the detailed plans that went right down to the built-ins, furnishings, and decorations. Furthermore, Maclure had successfully designed a home that according to *The Craftsman*, had been built with an easy, comfortable air, an inviting presence of character that would capably serve the needs of its inhabitants for generations. Designed

[135] Ibid.

with a built-in longevity, Maclure's diverse family of homes along the West Coast, of which his Craftsman style was but one of many, seem to have lived up to this praise.

Endowed with neither the pure Arts and Crafts ideology embodied by Smith, nor the academia-steeped prestige of Nobbs, Maclure's craft idealism revealed itself to the architect as a series of long-distance transmissions, arriving through bursts of synaptic inspiration tapped out in a code that only Maclure could decipher. His roots as the son of a frontier telegraph operator never far behind him, the architect's vision of a British Columbian urban landscape transformed from the ground up by the very materials and native colour palettes that made it so unique, Maclure remains to this day a key marker of the province's place within Canada. Aware of the outsider's early first impressions of Victoria, captured in an 1899 edition of the *CAB*, which variably described the capital as "feeble," "nondescript," and "monotonous," the unlucky visitor to Vancouver Island "doomed to disappointment," Maclure would have taken careful notice of these criticisms, knowing all too well the work yet needing to be done.[136] Taking solace, however, that on the matter of Victoria's residential enclaves, among the many "oak trees and wild roses, the bracken and the broom," there were to be "found many charmingly designed houses with a home-like, cosy air about them [...] that is really delightful," Maclure would have been honoured to have his own home included as an example of the wealth of riches just below the surface, waiting to be discovered.[137]

[136] "British Columbia Letter. No. 1.," *CAB* 12, no. 3 (March 1899): 50-1, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[137] Ibid.

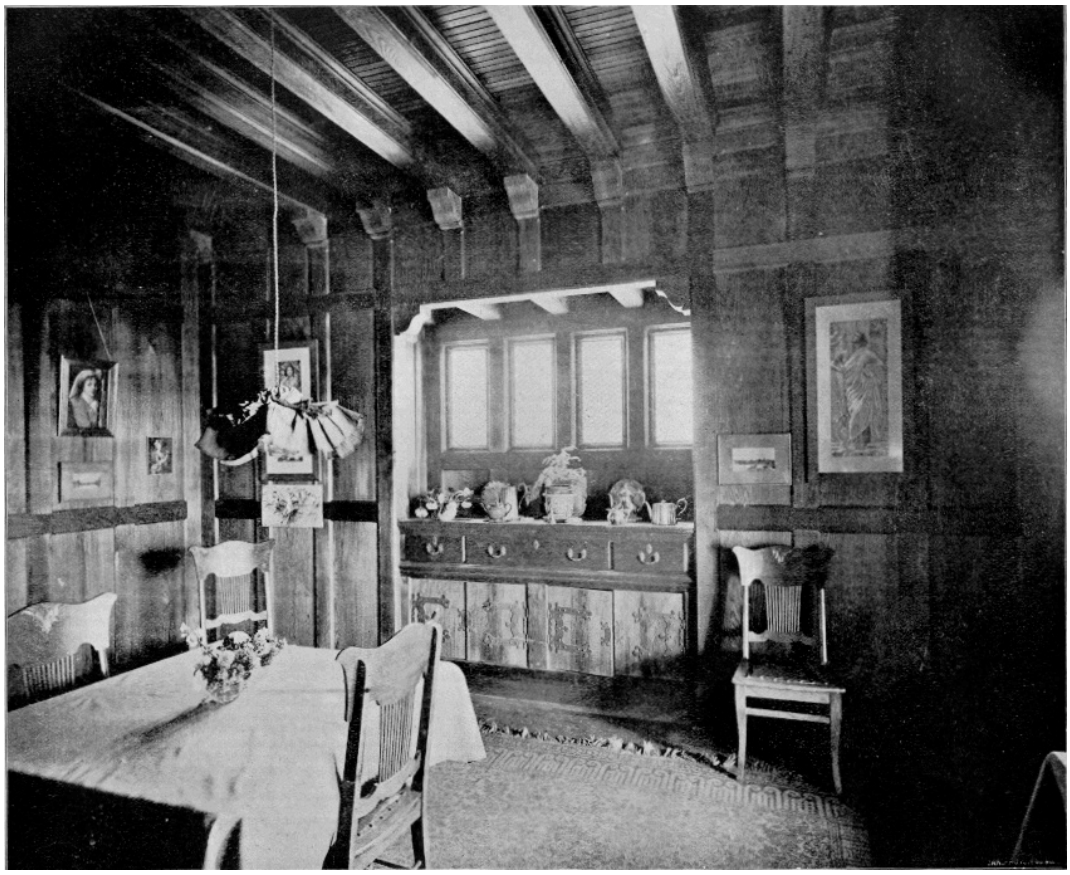

Figure 1.11 "Mr. Maclure's Bungalow, Victoria, B.C." *CAB* 12, no. 3 (March, 1899), plate 8. Included in the "British Columbia Letter No. 1" as an example of the "charmingly designed houses with a home-like, cosy air about them."

A lover of new ideas, and of making new acquaintances, Maclure was a favourite of Victoria's creative and leisured classes. Whether aspiring architects new to the Island, British or American firms desirous of a worthy partner, or newcomers to British Columbia in need of a new home, his many callers were likely never disappointed to meet the famous "Sam" fellow of whom they had heard so many good things.[138] Host to a revolving door of remarkable individuals, Emily Carr and Rudyard Kipling among them, and pen pals for many years with Frank Lloyd Wright, the latter from whom Maclure once purchased a beautiful folio edition of plans and drawings, the Victoria-based architect kept an impressive roster of contacts, his office the scene of many memorable

[138] "Catherine Maclure," Tape 2, Track 1, pg. 11.

meetings.[139] A founding member of the Vancouver Island Arts and Crafts Society in 1909, alongside Emily Carr and his wife Daisy – an accomplished artist and painter in her own right – Samuel Maclure was devoted to the calling of the Craft ideal, he and his wife's fondness for native flora and fauna making its way into almost every house he built.[140] Through his many connections made over the years, Maclure's sense of self, and sense of duty to design beautiful, nature-inspired, architectural creations worthy of his beloved British Columbia, served as a guide for the architect throughout his career.

Late in life, less than a decade before his death in 1929 at the age of 68, Maclure's application to the Architectural Institute of British Columbia [AIBC] remains as one of the rare recorded examples of the architect's words, his answer to the question of how he had come to the profession sparingly reported as: "by practice and experience."[141] Summing up nicely Maclure's life and architectural practice, these few words remain a testament to the architect's vision and talent for invention and artistic expression. Content to create his own path, and not nearly as beholden to tradition as his Central Canadian counterparts, Maclure's direct line to the wild, natural beauty that inspired himself and Emily Carr – and captured north of Toronto by the Group of Seven – Maclure was able to build his own truth into his designs, to construct from nature a reflection of the world around him. Thus, as with his devotion to building simply and honestly, Maclure was as much a student of the Arts and Crafts Movement as his more educated peers to the East.

Beyond their success and popularity as Canadian architects, the common tie that bound Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure to one another was their connection to Great Britain. Eden Smith grew up in the heart of industrial England, his Birmingham roots placing him

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[139] Bingham, *Samuel Maclure*, 5;51;64-5.
[140] Ibid, 51.
[141] "Samuel Maclure," *Application for Registration* (Vancouver: AIBC, June 7, 1921).

in the path of William Morris, exposing him directly to the teachings of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Toronto provided Smith with a solid circle of like-minded, wealthy, educated, English-Canadians with whom he could share his ideas, go into business, and build homes. Percy Nobbs had also come to Canada as an adult, finding life in Montreal to be quite different to his native Scotland. Nobbs brought with him to McGill the background of a young architect raised amidst the aesthetic and philosophical influences of Scotland's Robert Lorimer [1864-1929] and Charles Rennie Mackintosh [1868-1928]. Montreal offered Nobbs a unique challenge as well, in the form of its bilingual, English-French divide. To be discussed further in Chapters Two and Three, Nobbs was more than willing to accommodate what he perceived to the be the "indigenous,"[142] "Canadian" composite style into his work, adding a unique artistic sensibility to his collection of otherwise traditionally Scotch-English, Arts and Crafts designs. For Maclure, the British-Columbian-born, self-taught architect of the West Coast, his connection to Britain was strong in spirit, if not as direct as his British-Canadian architectural counterparts in the East. Many of Maclure's homes, however, whether the early Queen Anne examples found in New Westminster, or his more popular, Tudor Revival, and "Maclure Bungalow" designs found in Victoria and Vancouver, highlight the influence of English house types upon his repertoire. His clientele too, especially in the provincial capital of Victoria where he did most of his work, would have been made up largely by British expatriates who would have had a specific set of expectations.

The only force stronger than their shared bond to Britain, was the ability with which Canada's most successful Arts and Crafts architects were able to blend their respective aesthetic and philosophical principles of design to create something which was

[142] By "indigenous," Nobbs was referring to colonial, settler traditions, not to those of First Nations people.

regarded as uniquely Canadian. In each case, the Canadian climate necessitated a great deal of practical concern over materials, insulation, ventilation, window size, and rooflines – the latter two, in particular, recorded by both Smith and Nobbs to have had much to do with the invention of Canadian architectural forms. Owing to the need for extensive winterization for more than ninety percent of homes built across Canada at the time – a reality for a comparatively much smaller proportion of homes spread across the northernmost reaches of Britain and the United States – most Canadian homes were more technologically innovative than their British and American counterparts. Thus, the design and construction of practical, modern, and stylistically picturesque, Arts and Crafts homes and neighbourhoods significantly altered Canada's urban landscape. Informed by a unique mixture of English-inspired Arts and Crafts idealism and method, tempered by nationalism, and underscored by the practical necessities of invention, the manifestation of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, especially within domestic architecture, was the product of a specific time and place within Canada's history.

Conclusion

Keith Walden, in his book, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture*, suggests that as the nineteenth century drew to a close, Canadians, much like the people of other industrialized nations, increasingly began to see themselves collectively as living in a state of flux.[143] The dizzying list of technological innovations, including the automobile, telegraph, telephone, electricity, photography, moving pictures, and the assembly line, had all come with an unprecedented rapidity, endowing their recipients with a sense that the world had

[143] Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 333-4.

suddenly sprung into fast-motion. Walden's book looks deeply into the yearly phenomenon of Toronto's Industrial Exhibition, with its many showcases of modernity and progress, as a microcosm for the simultaneous and similar processes and experiences of Canadians living outside the gates. Participants to varying degrees within the collective experience of modernity, the public was largely left to their own devices, free to partake or reject the march of progress as they saw fit. Thus for the antimodernists among them, the desire to pull hard upon the reins of change can perhaps be best explained not simply as a traditionalist reflex, but as a desire to proceed with caution.

To escape the flux and retreat to more stable ground, various groups of antimodernists – Simple Lifers, radicals, Marxists, and even Canada's own Craft leaders – sought refuge in what they deemed to be reality through the pursuit of authentic experiences. The methods of escape from the so-called "unreality" of modern, city life, to that of the more "real" experiences of the pastoral, simple life, came in many forms. The British Arts and Crafts Movement, as envisioned by William Morris and his circle, provided a solution directly out of its stated desire to find genuine joy and pride in one's work, with one of its main goals being to maintain the integrity of the ancient craft traditions and skill sets of a bygone era. Once transported to the United States, however, the Craft ideal quickly became a casualty of capitalism. The power of the free market, fears of labour unrest, and republican moralism, all combined to drastically alter Morris' original message, to twist his aims to meet those of that country's craft leaders, including Gustav Stickley and Jane Addams. Even in Britain, the birthplace of the Craft ideal, Morris found himself largely alienated by his socialist beliefs, having lost the respect of many of his former colleagues and even his wife, eventually inspiring him to publish his

disillusionment in the form of bleak fantasy novels. Enter Canada into the fray, and it becomes quickly evident that the fate of the Craft ideal was met with a different turn.

Though it was inevitably met with many of the same challenges to its proper place and purpose in society as in Britain and the United States, the Arts and Crafts Movement received its warmest welcome in Canada. To a significant degree, the success of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was linked to its cultural positioning – being simultaneously Anglo-centric and "Canadian" – which in many ways served to bolster the traditionalist-nationalist framing of its aesthetic. Supported by a close-knit circle of cultural and professional organizations with overtly nationalistic, English-Canadian sympathies, Canada's craft leaders provided Canadians with an alternate path to modernity, indeed to nationhood, through artistic expression. Seizing upon Canadians' anxieties over nationalism, the careful adaptation of the Arts and Crafts Movement into the plurality of definitions of national identity that were being introduced at the time, Canada's craft leaders succeeded in marrying the aims of their various industries and professions to those of the nation at large. Lastly, to an extent far more tangible and enduring than even the most famous piece of art or handicraft, the homes of this era, built within the rapidly expanding streetcar suburbs of Canada, gave refuge to those among the newly emerging middle class who were for the first time able to partake of mainstream culture and modern living. To live comfortably, honestly, and unpretentiously, as advocated by *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, was a goal that Canada's craft leaders wished to share with those who chose to listen.[144]

[144] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930), 48.

The strongest, most forcible bent within the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was not socialism, the desire for a simple life, or even a last stand against the perceived dangers of modernity, but a quest to discover in this new land a style it could claim as its own. An extension of the idea of "craft exceptionalism" as introduced by the leaders of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, the nation's craft leaders believed that from the very ground they stood on, they could scrape from the earth and mould a style of Canadian architecture that would reflect the uniqueness of the country they called home. Building from nature, blending the indoors with the out, and taking full advantage of the palette of natural materials at their disposal, Canada's Arts and Crafts architects believed in their ability to discover the picturesque, to bring out the best of Canada – its people, geography, and climate all part of the nation's rich cultural heritage. British in origin, and distinctly North American in its predilection for invention, the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was born to a time and place primed for its powers of nationalistic inspiration, Canada at the turn of the last century a nation defined by its desire for definition.

Chapter Two:

Crafting a Canadian School of Architecture

Introduction

At a crowded Toronto City Council meeting in 2013, world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, then 84, born of this city, and with a practice in Los Angeles, sat beside another of Toronto's elite, theatre impresario and developer David Mirvish, son of "Honest" Ed Mirvish, and declared that in his professional opinion, there were but two structures worth saving in Toronto.[1] Old City Hall, designed and built by E. J. Lennox [1854-1933] in 1899, and Osgoode Hall, the original E Block built between 1829-32 by architects John Ewart [1788-1856] and William W. Baldwin [1775-1844] for Osgoode Hall Law School. Gehry's dismissal of all but a minute token of Toronto's architectural and cultural past was seen by many as an affront to the city. The notion that virtually all of Toronto's diverse collection of historic architecture, from the Victorian row houses of Cabbagetown, to the palatial splendour of Union Station, were essentially expendable, struck many not only as highly anachronistic, but as far too irreverent, especially coming from one of the city's most celebrated architects. For many, the irony was not lost, as Gehry, pledging for the historic significance of Old City Hall – which had narrowly escaped demolition decades prior in the name of progress – praised its architectural merit while simultaneously condemning the vast majority of the city to the wrecker's ball.

Though the notion of the disposable, renewable city reached its zenith during the post-war period in North America, the twenty-first century was supposedly an era of

[1] Peter Kuitenbrouwer, "The only two buildings in Toronto worth saving are Old City Hall and Osgoode Hall, Frank Gehry says," *National Post*, November 19, 2013, http://news.nationalpost.com/2013/11/19/the-only-two-buildings-in-toronto-worth-saving-are-old-city-hall-and-osgoode-hall-frank-gehry-says/

enlightened attitudes towards urban forms, building to a human scale, and taking careful measures to preserve historic structures. Gehry's flippant attitude towards Toronto's heritage, paired with a proposal to construct three avant-garde, supertall towers, at the expense of a row of nineteenth-century edifices along King Street West, and the Princess of Wales Theatre, built by the late Ed Mirvish, spoke to an outmoded way of thinking. The city transformed, these towers were described by the younger Mirvish as, "sculptures of glass," which would bring new life to the city and surrounding neighbourhood. Though Mr. Gehry's plans have since been modified to a two tower configuration, and although this was not the first time Toronto, or any city of comparable size and significance had to face such decisions involving urban renewal or redevelopment, it was perhaps the words of the respected, Toronto-born architect which stung the sharpest. Gehry's insistence upon the disposable nature of Toronto's architectural heritage echoed a much older, well-worn notion that Toronto had rarely, if ever, built anything special or worth saving.

Gehry was not the first to underestimate Toronto's architectural significance. Going back to the 1880s, Toronto was in the midst of one of its earliest encounters with urban renewal and modern city planning, the city inundated with an assortment of self-described experts, city planners, renowned architects, and deep-pocketed investors, all jostling for power and position, each with their own distinct vision. Although debates over density and height would be the talk of later generations, the battles fought over how the city ought to develop, evolve, and most significantly, to whom the contracts should be awarded – to foreign, or to local architects and firms – defined Toronto's early ascent into the modern metropolis it is today. For well over a century, Toronto, and indeed many of Canada's largest urban centres, have struggled with these questions. The rise of

twentieth-century urban Canada was largely defined by a period of swift, transformative change, one founded in large part upon the birth of the Canadian architectural profession, heavily intertwined as it was, with the arrival of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.

The Arts and Crafts Movement, its philosophies of art, design, and craftsmanship, paired with its nationalistic underpinnings, formed a large part of the deliberation over the future of Canadian architecture. This chapter will explore the debate over professionalization, considered alongside the influence of Eden Smith in Ontario and Percy Nobbs in Quebec, whose respective positions upon the subject were themselves shaped considerably by their divergent upbringing, prestige, and cultural context. The creation of various Schools of Architecture, first in Ontario and then in Quebec, soon led to further debate among architects and educators about the best methods by which to educate and train the next generation of Canadian architects. Looming large, the grassroots, Arts and Crafts-informed views of Smith, and the top-down, academic, albeit similarly Arts and Crafts-inspired teachings of Nobbs, went a long way towards shaping the development of architectural education, training, and professionalization, within their respective spheres of influence. The arrival of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, coming at a critical time within the early development of the Canadian architectural profession, integrated itself into the nascent search for Canada's early twentieth-century style and identity in a way that tied the fate of both to a common cause. Thus caught in the balance between professionalism, protectionism, and the promotion of local talent and materials over foreign, on the one side, and the desire to create a national form of art, craft, design, and architecture on the other, the twin forces of professionalization and nationalism were bound by the arrival of the Canadian Craft Movement. This chapter will

thus explore the history not only of the Canadian architectural profession and of the rise of the Craft Movement, but will consider each in turn as different sides of the same coin.

What is in a name?: Defining "Architecture" and "Architect" in Canada

The *Canadian Architect and Builder* published its first monthly issue in January, 1888. The journal's editor, C. H. Mortimer, bestowed upon the premiere issue an impressive sense of purpose and offered an open forum for those interested in the advancement of sound building practices, and generally, of good architectural taste:

> The rapid improvement in methods of construction, in decorative art, and in sanitary appliances, which has marked the history of the last ten years in Canada, and the field of usefulness which seems to be open to a printed medium of information and communication between the thousands of persons interested in such subjects, has led to the publication of this, the first number of THE CANADIAN ARCHITECT AND BUILDER.[2]

Mortimer went on to suggest that while the architectural practice in Canada had been improving, there was still much to be done, the work that lay ahead being the collective responsibility of the Canadian building community. From bricklayer to builder, artist to architect, it was the editor's belief that, "With the assistance of a corps of regular contributors, embracing men of well-known ability in the fields of architecture, engineering, construction, decoration, sanitation, etc., every effort will be made to render the contents of each number of this journal increasingly valuable."[3] If the state of architecture in Canada was to evolve and expand any further, as was made clear from the premiere issue, full participation from all corners of the building profession had to be engaged, informed, and connected. For all concerned, the *CAB* was there to fill the void.

The *CAB*'s first edition introduced two of the most pressing concerns facing the fledgling practice of architecture at the time – the current state of architecture in Canada,

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[2] C. H. Mortimer, "Salutory," *CAB* 1, no. 1 (January 1888): 1, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[3] Ibid.

and what, precisely, it meant, or ought to mean, to be labelled an "architect." The first attempt to evaluate the status of Canadian architecture came from Hamilton architect James Balfour [1854-1917], his piece, "Architecture in Canada," setting the precedent for countless others who would chime in over the course of the *CAB*'s twenty-year run. Balfour's critique of the state of Canadian architecture holds precious little back, beginning with the assertion that, "Looking at the principal cities and towns in Canada from an architectural standpoint, they must be considered a failure."[4] Though perhaps a harsh criticism for a nation which had been formed within the author's lifetime, Balfour does add some context and hope for the future. He goes on to argue that Canada's evidently abundant architectural failings were "especially true as regards the character of our homes, and I trust you [the *CAB*] will make an effort in your new journal to impress upon the public that if our homes are to be beautiful, the errors that have crept into society and for which the architects are to a great extent responsible, must be corrected."[5]

The first of these errors, according to Balfour, was that the architects of his day had fallen victim to either the vanity of their patrons, who were inclined to be blithely swayed from one fashionable trend to the next, or to their own, pushing for extraneous shows of architectural experimentation.[6] The result of this recurrent problem was that homes were increasingly being built with little or no thought towards the finished product. Wealthy clients, ostensibly equipped with more money than taste, were accused of being allowed too much latitude, the final product described as an unseemly mishmash of materials and styles, resulting in the asynchronous pairings of French shutters, Tudor

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[4] James Balfour, "Architecture in Canada," *CAB* 1, no. 1 (January, 1888): 3, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

beams, and Neoclassical columns. Worse than this, Balfour argued, were the self-styled "professional architects" who sought to "belittle his profession by attempting to make a monument to himself out of what should be a merchant's home,"[7] creating in the process a house of little practical sense or utility. Instead of being built according to the established principles of good design, homes created in this way were described as often, "hav[ing] good honest pine grained to imitate rosewood or oak, and in all likelihood [...] a tower and balcony, and no way to get to either; [which] would be of no use if they could be got to."[8] Comfort, honesty, and good design sense, those pillars of architectural wisdom held sacred by the Arts and Crafts Movement, had been to Balfour and many others' disappointment and chagrin, left out of the building trade, resulting in the perception of a national crisis within the realm of Canadian architecture.

Education and professional training in the art and science of architecture were offered by Balfour as the most effective methods by which the many ailments facing Canadian architecture could be treated. The remedy reflected the sincere concern he and others of his profession shared about the depreciated status of a once noble profession:

> If architects wish the public to have that respect for their profession which it should have, they must be educated in science and art, and be able and not afraid to impart it to their clients. They must discard fraud in building, put away all imitations, and build truthfully showing the import and meaning of every feature. Neither must they be afraid to introduce new ideas after giving them careful thought, for this is where the true artist excels. He must give more study to the requirements of the age in regard to comfort, sociability and entertainment. The more truthful we make our homes, the better they will meet the above requirements, and the coming generation will be better able to attain the summit of perfection which we should strive for – that is to say, a style of architecture for our homes in this country.[9]

In order to regain its place among the respected professions of society, modern architecture as an art, a science, and a profession, had to become precisely that – a

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

profession in the same right as a doctor, lawyer, or engineer. There could be no truth in design, or any honest, good work to be done in Canada, so the argument went, unless the realm of architecture and those who practiced it, were brought up to a higher standard. Only then, according to Balfour, and echoed in the years to come by Smith, Nobbs, and many others to weigh in on the subject, could the status of Canadian architecture be raised sufficiently to a place of reverence and praise. Furthermore, the creation of a national, Canadian architectural style, as argued by Balfour and others, could only be achieved once full support had been thrust behind the attainment – through organization, education, training, and political empowerment – of professional status.

Balfour offered one final, prophetic piece of advice for Canadian architects as he argued against the commonly held architectural practice of copying historic forms and models instead of designing new ones. His remarks made the case for an architectural practice for Canada in which old forms are not abandoned, but are used instead as a starting point on the path towards designing a national form of architecture.[10] The author invoked the architectural history and wisdom of past civilizations to illustrate his point:

> [I]t is not necessary to disregard the styles of the Greeks or Romans or the architecture of the middle ages, but to develop them in such a way that they will give expression to thought. Why people of today should follow the Greeks or the Romans more than the Greeks or the Romans followed the Egyptians, I cannot understand, and I think if we make an effort we will succeed in producing a Canadian nineteenth century style.[11]

Balfour took his example a step further, musing that had the aforementioned parties followed the past as dogmatically as some modern architects, "we would still be building pyramids."[12] The solution to breaking the cycle was to, "make architecture again a living

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Ibid.

art as it was in and previous to the thirteenth century,"[13] a task he held hopefully out for the present generation of Canadian architects, "to be intelligently dealt with."[14]

While a connection to the past was central to architectural education and apprenticeship during the nineteenth century, and a basic grasp of classical forms a near-mandatory prerequisite for calling oneself an architect, there were few as dedicated to the study of antiquity than those belonging to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Thus adding a layer of historicism to the profession, that unlike the mere copying of historical styles that was argued by Morris, Smith, and Nobbs, to be counterproductive to the evolution of their craft, this connection to the past was spiritual rather than physical, driven primarily by a desire to reclaim for architecture the prestige it once held. Writing in 1896, in *The Quest*, published on behalf of the Birmingham Guild of Handicraft to which Morris was a founding member, Arts and Crafts architect and philosopher William Lethaby [1857-1931], presented his vision for the direction which architecture ought to take:

> In every city which did anything, from Florence and Nuremburg to Paris and London, the craftsmen were not only honoured citizens but, through the organized craft guilds, masons, bakers, tanners, largely governed the towns. [...] The nobles formed, as it were, the guild of war lords, as the Church formed the guild for religion; but labour also won an estate in the towns and governed them openly. The town of the Middle Ages was an assemblage of craftsmen and traders governed by delegates of their organizations. The king knocked at Temple Bar, to be admitted by the goldsmith or mercer who, as mayor, represented the citizens. Step by step with the assumption of power by the craft guilds in the Free Towns, architecture – that is, the harmonious association of all the crafts – progressed, until the towns of Europe were not mere squalid blocks of bricks and mortar, but organic works of art.[15]

Described by Lethaby in terms that would have been familiar to Pugin, Morris, and later adherents to the Movement, including Smith, who quoted Lethaby in his writings, architecture was understood as the "harmonious association of all the crafts."[16] More than this, the realm of craft itself, and especially as it was said to have enjoyed an exalted

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[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid.
[15] W. R. Lethaby, "Arts and the Functions of Guilds," *The Quest* 1, no. 6 (July 1896): 204-5.
[16] Ibid.

status in the Middle Ages, was believed to have once held a highly revered status, one which architects of all stripes sought to reclaim towards the end of the nineteenth century. Thus no matter one's personal beliefs regarding their connection to what was by then increasingly becoming framed as the "profession" of architecture, it was accepted by the majority of architects that it was up to them to ensure that the practice of architecture regained the autonomy and control over its destiny that it had once held. What was far less clear, however, was the method by which such a goal would be best attained.

Professionalization had by the end of the nineteenth century, crept into nearly every type of skilled work, from medicine, to law, to engineering, and beyond. No longer the exclusive purview of the learned gentlemen, historic professions, such as medicine and law, began to become more accessible in step with access to education and the rise of the middle class. Between 1870 and 1920, according to Christopher Moore, the old, established professions migrated away from "Georgian professionalism" towards "modern professionalism" as we know it today.[17] The rapid accreditation of technical schools, along with the rise in public reverence for "the expert," converged by the end of the nineteenth century to create a world in which highly specialized work became synonymous with the educated, qualified professional. While the Law Society of Upper Canada had been in existence since 1797, dentists professionalized in 1868, followed by chartered accountants and veterinarians in 1884, engineers in 1889, and architects in 1890.[18] By the time of the OAA's founding in 1889, the professional landscape in Canada had already undergone a significant amount of rapid change. To those central to the debate over the professionalization of architecture, who would have been familiar with

[17] Christopher Moore, *The Law Society of Upper Canada and Ontario's Lawyers, 1797-1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 147.
[18] Ibid, 146.

the experiences of the trades with which they had working relationships, the pros and cons of seeking regulation would have been well understood.

The role of the modern architect, especially of what it ought to be within the context of the conditions then facing the status of architecture in Canada, was another perennial issue covered by the *CAB*. James Young's article, "The Architect," identified the common understanding of what an architect was, and made some bold assertions as to the direction the occupation might assume on the path to professionalization through education and organization. "What does the name 'Architect' imply?"[19] Young asked, as he answered his own question with a definition: "It means in the accepted term, 'a master builder,' that is, one who by long study, aided by a general proficiency of education, has acquired a proper knowledge of the elements of architecture, and the ability to practically lay out his designs and plans, both general and in detail, with specifications."[20] While Young acknowledged that the public would be aware of the skill and talent supposedly possessed by one labelled as an "architect," the author made the important point that unlike the true professions of the world, "say, surgery, law, and even land surveying,"[21] there was as of yet no formal entrance exam, registration process, or organization of any kind to usher newly minted "architects" into society.[22] "In what manner does the architect now become a profesionalist? [*sic*]"[23] Young inquired, "How frequently do we see a newly-risen sign setting forth a self-made, a self-ordained [architect who] …without the ceremony of further initiation, constitutes himself an architect fully fledged, ready for

[19] James Young, "The Architect," *CAB* 1, no. 1 (January 1888): 3, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

work?"[24] Young clearly found this conundrum vexing, there being no immediate answer or any ready-made solution for solving what he and others in his field saw as the second of two of the most pressing concerns facing Canadian architecture at the time. The problem rested entirely upon the fact that, according to Young, "there is no law to prevent his [the architect] doing this [becoming an "architect"]. He has the right to place his name on the roll of the profession without let or hindrance."[25]

Without "let or hindrance," there were thus those among the practitioners of architecture who had come into the practice lacking any of the formal training or education required by professions of equal skill, talent, and importance. Young argued that while quackery in the fields of medicine and law were a troubling matter, there were regulations and laws in place to protect the public, whereas there was no such defence against the work of amateur architects.[26] The need for such regulation was seen as critical, the collapse of a poorly designed home, school, or office building, equally, if not potentially more disastrous than an improper diagnosis or mistrial. Great Britain and the United States, as Young mentioned, had created their own architectural organizations, the Royal Institute of British Architects [RIBA] in 1834, and the Institute of American Architects [IAA] in 1857. The members of these and other organizations, Young argued, "have no doubt proved their qualifications – because they thought fit to do so – not that they were required to do so, or that it was necessary as a qualification to practice."[27] The architects of Britain and the United States had organized themselves long ago in the name

[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid, 4.
[27] Ibid.

of self-regulation and improvement, and thus among most Canadian architects, it was high time that those practicing in Canada followed suit.

Young concluded his remarks by restating his case for professionalization, it being of benefit not only to the public interest, but to the many students and apprentices of architecture soon to begin a practice of their own. Young saw this as, "a duty [architects] owe to themselves and to their students, who pay them large fees and devote years of time in learning the profession."[28] Young followed this line of thought by asking why upon completion of their apprenticeships, students were not required to pass qualifying examinations, and thus obtain a degree and license to practice, and thereby become professionals as would a doctor or lawyer.[29] Furthermore, according to Young, it was the right of Canadian architects, and the practice in general, to be protected by the law, as its, "aspirations are noble,"[30] and its, "object is to benefit and improve society and mankind."[31] Finally, Young put a question to the upcoming generation of architects, asking who among them, "will rise in their might and right, and have established for themselves an Act that will forever raise the standard and dignity of their profession and secure for them against imposition and empiricism?" For Young and his contemporaries both seasoned and new, the Act that would "forever raise the standard and dignity of the profession," arrived less than two years later, under the authorship of the OAA.

The Creation of the Ontario Association of Architects

According to Geoffrey Simmins, the formation of the OAA occurred in large part due to a, "coincidental combination of […] circumstances [that] fostered a mood

[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

conducive to founding an architects' association."[32] The three events identified by Simmins include, the push for technical education by Ontario Education Minister George Ross [1841-1914], the creation of the *CAB,* and the reaching of a boiling point – owing to the perception among Canadian architects of playing second fiddle to foreign competitors – that fostered the desire to organize with an aim towards improving their station through professionalization.[33] Quickly unfolding during the late 1880s, these developments created the perfect storm of ambition and action leading to the formation of the OAA in 1889, followed by the provincial legislation of the Ontario Architects' Act in 1890.

The debut of the *CAB* in January, 1888, satiated the desire of Ontario architects for a venue to present and debate the latest ideas and issues facing the profession, as well as an avenue by which to find one another and be connected to goods and services through the relatively new medium of print ads. There had been no single, consolidated directory of architects in the province before its inclusion in the premiere issue of the *CAB*, nor had there been any reliable way to seek out good craftspeople, tradesmen, and construction materials without simple word-of-mouth. When in 1889, the paper proudly assumed the role of official mouthpiece of the OAA, architects across Ontario expressed their thanks. News of new buildings and materials, expert opinions on construction, debates over the art and science of architecture, plus information about design competitions, and political developments pertinent to the profession, were all discussed at length throughout the monthly publication's twenty-year run.

Editor C. H. Mortimer, along with a host of regular writers and occasional contributors to the *CAB* – mostly architects, contractors, or other persons connected to the

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[32] Geoffrey Simmins, *Ontario Association of Architects: A Centennial History, 1889-1989* (Toronto: The Ontario Association of Architects, 1989), 29.
[33] Ibid.

industry – nearly all took the same stance on the key concerns facing architecture. The *CAB* generally gained consensus among its writers and contributors on subjects such as labour, the nature of architectural competitions, the selection of foreign architects over local, and at least in the early issues, the desire to professionalize. On organized labour, the *CAB* held rather contentious views, on the one hand showing real concern for the poor, unsafe conditions facing construction workers and labourers, while on the other, displaying generally little to no sympathy for the "shiftless" union man who was said to desire more pay for less work. On architectural competitions, the journal was at best cautiously pessimistic, often fearing the worst – this being the omnipresent spectre of foreign special treatment. On foreign architects, referring mainly to those coming from Britain, or increasingly, the United States, the *CAB*'s opinions were more than clear. Local architects were seen as being all too often at the mercy of unfair architectural design competitions that would only begrudgingly award contracts to Canadian architects, only to hand the project over to the first foreigner to show it even the smallest amount of interest. This was to their eyes, and to those of virtually all Canadian architects, a source of national scandal and shame.

For the vast majority of Canadian architects, both in Ontario and across Canada, the truest test of the perceived need for organization and professionalization came in the form of the Ontario government's well-documented, and highly-criticized, design competition for the new Legislative Buildings at Queen's Park. The *CAB* was meticulous in its detailed coverage of the most controversial aspects of the affair, keeping their readers informed, and allowing plenty of space for both their own and the readership's condemnation of events as they unfolded. In the May, 1890 issue of the *CAB*, an

extensive summary of the events pertinent to the saga of the much-maligned design competition was published, offering the reader a comprehensive review of the protracted scandal as it had developed. The article criticized the Government of Liberal Premier, Oliver Mowat [1820-1903] for its attempts to whitewash details of Buffalo architect, R. A. Waite's [1848-1911] dubious selection as official architect for the new Legislative Buildings. The *CAB* took issue with the Ontario Government's official viewpoint, as quoted from a pamphlet titled, *The Record of the Mowat Government; 18 Years of Progressive Legislation and Honest Administration*, that, "'He [Waite] secured the appointment after a fair competition, expert judges deciding that his plans were the best,'"[34] declaring this to be, "a glaring and deliberate falsehood [a] statement […] best characterized by the use of a word of three letters."[35] Stopping just short of labelling the Premier a liar, the anonymous editorial piece took a grim view of the handling of the competition by the Mowat Government, and was highly sympathetic to the cause of the local, Toronto firms who were slighted in favour of the Yankee interloper – the latter's British heritage, as championed by the aforementioned pamphlet, offering little comfort.[36]

The original design competition had begun nearly a decade earlier, in 1880. At this time, the old Parliament Buildings, located, fittingly, on Parliament Street, in east Toronto, had outlived their purpose, the Province desirous of constructing something more appropriate for the rising commercial centre and Provincial capital. The *CAB* reminded readers that in 1880, there were thirteen sets of plans entered into the competition – six from the United States, and seven from Canada.[37] Of these, the top

[34] *CAB* 3, no. 5 (May 1890): 51, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.

three designs were all Canadian, first place going to Darling & Curry, second to Smith & Gemmell, and third to Gordon & Helliwell.[38] The first and second place designs were deemed too expensive to commission, as they had both exceeded the set limit of $500,000, leaving the winner, albeit temporarily, as third place entrants Gordon & Helliwell.[39] A second competition, this one only between the aforementioned top three, awarded Darling & Curry, and Gordon & Helliwell first and second place respectively.[40] This time, the two competing firms were instructed to submit full, working plans, complete with specifications, a request they fulfilled by submitting designs – $612,000 for Darling & Curry and $542,000 for Gordon & Helliwell.[41] The completion of these working designs, finished at considerable cost by each of the two firms, were done in good faith, under the, "distinct understanding,"[42] according to the *CAB*, that one or the other would be selected. However, facing a budget crisis, the Mowat Government abruptly put the competition on hiatus, delaying the project by five years. [43] In 1885, the Ontario Government held a new design competition, this time with an increased budget of $750,000, an amount well in keeping with the two tenders in hand. At this point, the details of the decision-making, and thus the selection process regarding the two winning plans, became mysteriously opaque, the man in charge of the selection none other than the one who would go on to win the competition – Buffalo architect R. A. Waite. Waite had been a member of the judging panel, his well-known work in the United States and

[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.

Canada making his involvement up to then nothing of major concern. After the finalists' plans went into review, however, it appears that Waite's role became far more significant.

The same *CAB* article went on to suggest that perhaps in collusion with the Government architect, who had been keeping a close eye on the proceedings over the last five years, Mr. Waite sought to suppress the Government architect's official report on the individual merits of each entry, while he himself chose to quietly shelve the winning designs for a time of eight or nine months.[44] Here the *CAB* offered its strongest opinions on the matter, dispensing with its usual politesse, boldly voicing its contention that:

> It is, however surmised that the delay was rendered necessary that Mr. Waite might worm himself into the confidence of some members of the Government that in his opinion neither of the designs was suitable, and that he was the only architect on this continent capable of carrying out such an important work. It is also surmised that before sending in his report he had in the kindness of his heart prepared sketch plans which he approved as being much superior to the designs then in his possession. It may be that this is the competition which Mr. Waite entered and which was so fairly conducted by competent judges. We have been informed that he sent in a report condemning the designs of Messrs. Gordon & Helliwell and Darling & Curry. This report, like the first one, has never see the light of day, nor has Mr. Waite condescended to furnish an epitome of its contents further than to circulate statements which were false.[45]

The *CAB* addressed the suspicious dealings of the Government and Waite, and took direct aim at the character and reputation of all involved. The *CAB* made it abundantly clear that a critical line had been crossed, the actions of the Ontario Government viewed as an affront not only to the pride of Canadian architects, but to the very idea of nationalism.

An American architect had been clandestinely chosen over the local talent selected by the jury of not one, but two separate competitions, five years apart, and at great expense and embarrassment to the two Toronto firms which had each time come out on top. If ever the battle cry of "local talent over foreign" had been sounded among Canadian architects to date, it would now resonate loudly across the Province and indeed

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[44] Ibid, 51.
[45] Ibid.

the country, as the desire to organize had been never stronger. Adding fuel to the fire, the Legislative Buildings as constructed by Waite at an estimated cost of $2,000,000, came in at four times the initial amount set by the 1880 competition, and nearly three times that set in 1885.[46] More embarrassing than the extravagant cost overruns, coming directly out of public purse, the foreign-made structure, having evaded the judging panel and spuriously beaten out the true, local winners, was concluded to be only mediocre in its design - the banal, American-Romanesque pile a symbolic monument to indifference.

Galvanized by what came to be known as the scandal at Queen's Park, the *CAB*, with the majority support of the OAA, wasted little time in promoting the central aim of the latter's mandate – the push for professionalization by any means necessary. Desirous of taking full advantage of the passions flared by the recent debacle, and sure to publicly rebut those who remained critical of seeking professionalization, the majority view of the OAA was that there would be no proper protection for Canadian architects so long as they were deprived of the same legal status and autonomy as had been recently awarded to accountants, veterinarians, and engineers. For while it was true that the formation of the OAA in 1889 had been an important first step, there remained the hurdle of legal protection and officialdom to be garnered from the Provincial Government. Aware that the cause of the Canadian architectural profession would be lost to many outside of the field, the OAA was careful to weigh the pros and cons of the decision to seek professional status. In the end, the OAA settled on a path towards officialdom that depended almost entirely upon the whim of the very people who had repeatedly let them down through a mixture of indifference and long-established partiality for the supposed prestige associated with hiring foreign over local talent.

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[46] Ibid, 52.

Designing a Profession: the OAA and the Ontario Architects' Act

In 1889, the OAA submitted to the Provincial Government its Act of Incorporation, this early draft to form the basis of the Ontario Architects' Act of 1890.[47] The Act of Incorporation was a foundational blueprint created by the OAA to lay out its primary goals and to make sense of the organization's self-regulatory, legal powers. Among its most significant sections, were those pertaining to the OAA's power to restrict membership through its own, provincially ordained qualifying exams, and to thus control who could and could not practice as a professional architect.[48] However, though it would seem that the OAA had set itself on a path to victory, its cause had in fact been dealt its most devastating blow yet. At the final moments prior to ratifying the Ontario Architects' Act, the Province moved to alter the clause that would have, if left untouched, guaranteed full statutory regulation and the closing of the profession. By changing the wording of the Act to include "Registered Architect," as opposed to the more simple, "Architect," the Province had in essence created a two-tiered system of professional qualification which ultimately still allowed all interested parties to practice. Thus whether by design or not, the seemingly simple re-wording set the OAA – and the rest of the nascent Canadian architectural profession – down a path of in-fighting and successive legislative battles that lasted into the 1930s. The professionalization debate thus became one of the industry's defining points of contention for more than a generation.

Falling on the heels of the Queen's Park debacle, the *CAB* was quick to announce its displeasure. The last-minute change of heart by the Province was decried as having created the virtually meaningless title of "Registered Architect," while allowing

[47] Kelly Crossman, *Architecture in Transition: From Art to Practice, 1885-1906* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 36.
[48] Ibid, 37.

unregistered amateurs to continue their practice unabated. Failing to achieve the primary goal of the OAA, the compromise was viewed as a yet another betrayal by the Province, their cause thrown into turmoil by bureaucratic interference. The April, 1890 edition of the *CAB* reproduced the Ontario Architects' Act in full, including the offending clause:

> 25. From and after the first day of July, 1890, no person shall be entitled to take or use the name of 'Registered Architect,' either alone or in combination with any other word or words, or any name, title, or description, implying that he is registered under this Act, unless he be so registered. Any person, who, after the above date, not being registered under this Act, takes or uses any such name, title, or description, as aforesaid, shall be liable, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding $25 for the first offence, and not exceeding $100 for each subsequent offence.[49]

The clause was toothless, thus rendering the spirit of the Ontario Architects' Act all but moot. Despite members' ostensible disappointment, the *CAB* was quick to point out that while the Act had, "suffered emasculation in its passage through the House [and] in its present shape is in great measure disappointing to the Association, [...] it should be considered as one step forward in the direction of securing for the architectural profession the recognition and respect which it is due, inasmuch as it enables the public to distinguish between qualified and unqualified practitioners."[50] Rounding out the *CAB*'s comments, came a call for every member of the OAA to become a "Registered Architect," and thus fill out their ranks while simultaneously making a strong case for achieving their end goal of full professional status and a closed profession.[51]

Despite the *CAB*'s optimistic outlook, the embarrassment suffered by the members of the OAA continued to chafe. The September, 1890 issue, published five months after the defeat of the Act, cited a collection of international ribbing on account of the OAA's recent humiliation. The article in question, "An American Criticism," was a

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[49] "The Ontario Architects' Act," *CAB* 3, no. 4 (April 1890): 41, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[50] Editor, *CAB* 3, no. 4 (April 1890): 38, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[51] Ibid.

republication of a recent piece from the Minnesota-based architectural journal, *Northwest Architect*, with the *CAB*'s own rebuttal attached. Though most of the piece dealt with the American journal's chiding of Canadian architects' attempts to use tariffs as a means to keep American, or otherwise foreign designs out of the country, the article referred to the recent failure of the OAA to close the profession.[52] The *Northwest Architect* had done some digging, and came up with a rather embarrassing anecdote out of the pages of the London-based architectural journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects:

> Are not our brethren looking too much to statutory law, instead of putting themselves into line with certain natural laws, to give them success? Probably no body of architects ever had so much of the former kind before as these, our brothers in the Province of Ontario. But the Act passed for their benefit by their provincial legislature last winter does not seem to have much effect except to call down upon them the jibes of their brethren in the United States and England. Even the staid organ of the Royal Institute of British Architects cannot refrain from making a little joke to the effect that there have been architects but now it 'has been decided that, within at least the province of Ontario, there shall be architects and 'registered architects.' It is time that some Americans as well as our brothers in Canada had found out the futility, the folly, of depending on legislative enactments to procure for them the prizes which, with courage strengthened hands they may grasp for themselves.[53]

It was with much bemusement then, to the wider American and British architectural professions, that the ill news regarding the plight of the struggling OAA in Canada was met. Needless to say, the feeling was not mutual.

In its rebuttal, the *CAB* was quick to point out the protectionist tariffs in place along the American border, moving on to clarify that the "absurd distinction,"[54] of "registered architect," had been forcibly imposed upon them by the Province:

> Canadian architects are not responsible for the fact that by the 'Ontario Architects' Act' there has been created the absurd distinction of 'architects' and 'registered architects.' The desire of the promoters of the Bill was that no person should be entitled to call himself an 'architect' who had not given proof of his proficiency and registered under the Act. While on the legislative dissecting table where the measure was reduced to a mere skeleton of its original form, the word 'registered' was inserted.[55]

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[52] "An American Criticism," *CAB* 3, no. 11 (November 1890): 101, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid, 102.
[55] Ibid.

The Canadian architectural profession had been greatly compromised by the meddling of the Provincial Government. From the vantage point of the OAA, a vote of no confidence had been cast on behalf of the Province, its continued indifference towards the OAA, its members, and their work, manifested by the cynical creation of the "Registered Architect." Nevertheless, the OAA carried on fighting for autonomy and control over its fate for another forty years, finally achieving full professional status in 1931.

For a brief moment in 1890, between the drafting of the Ontario Architect's Act and its defeat, the Canadian architectural profession had never seemed stronger. The publication of the *CAB* in 1888, the formation of the OAA in 1889, and the subsequent founding of the PQAA in 1890, had created a momentum within the industry that appeared to be unstoppable. Though ultimately proved wrong, first in Ontario, and then soon after in Quebec upon the PQAA's own similar defeat upon the question of professionalization at the hands of the Province,[56] the spark that had been lit would not go out easily, the long push for professionalization gathering a host of allies as time went on. Crossman argues that by the end of the nineteenth century, Canadian architects began to view the concepts of professionalism and registration as interchangeable.[57] The heart of the matter, it would seem, was the choice – on behalf of the Government, and by extension, the public – of unto whom they would entrust the building of their country.

The efforts of Canadian architects to be taken seriously as skilled professionals and as masters of their trade, by the Government, big business, and the average consumer, had been continuous since at least the early 1880s. In addition to the failed Ontario Architect's Act, attempts to protect and bolster the profession against foreign

[56] Editor. *CAB* 4, no. 1 (January 1891): 2, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[57] Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, 39.

architects, such as trade tariffs on architectural plans, and the open boycotting of unfair design competitions, proved of little use in elevating the Canadian architectural profession to legitimacy. If local architects were to be denied professional status, and yet still be made to compete on equal terms against foreign talent and designs – and all without benefit of proper schools, apprenticeship programs, and self-regulatory powers – they would require something to give them the edge needed to bolster local demand for their services. In order to create something that only they could provide, they needed to create a national style, one that placed pride in the use of local materials and craftsmanship, thereby promoting a Canadian design aesthetic and sensibility that could stand on its own. It was thus no small coincidence that amid the debates over the future of architectural education, training, and the profession itself, that as the Arts and Crafts Movement swept into North America, Canadian architects took keen notice. Salvation had come in the form of oak beams and inglenooks.

The Education Debate in Ontario and Quebec

Beginning in 1871, with the founding of the College of Technology in Toronto, the march towards professionalization for Canada's engineers, followed over the next three decades by several other scientific and technical trades, including architecture, was set into motion. Described by A. B. McKillop as part of a larger shift in public perception about what it meant to be a "professional," especially outside of the traditionally narrow definition of the term as reserved for doctors and lawyers, the slow, piecemeal acceptance of the industrial trades was all but complete by the end of the nineteenth century – owing in large part to the rapid evolution and development of practical education.[58] Though the

[58] A. B. McKillop, *Matters of Mind: The University in Ontario, 1791-1951* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 169.

College of Technology was at first established as a separate entity to the University of Toronto, its classes free to the public, with no degrees conferred, and little, if any cross-pollination of faculty, curricula, or students, this was more to do with the established attitudes of the time, rather than any form of long-term educational planning.[59] Less than a decade later, the founding of the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto in 1878, set practical education onto an entirely new path, one which through integration into academia, proved a much more effective method by which to build the case for professionalization among nearly all of the modern industrial trades.[60] Devoid of free night classes, these replaced by three- and four-year academic degree programs, the School of Practical Science, eventually home to a myriad of professional departments, including a Department of Architecture, ended up creating a rift within the trades. From this point forward, first in Ontario, and soon after across Canada, becoming a "professional" in many cases conflicted with, or precluded, the ability to come into the trades via the traditional means of apprenticeship and practical experience. This divide, falling at first largely along class lines, eventually crept into the fundamental debate among Canadian architects over the future of professionalization, and by extension, of the best methods by which to educate and train the next generation.

Education and training for students and apprentices of architecture in Canada was a topic of much debate and discussion within the *CAB* from its inception. The call for public funds for the addition of a Department of Architecture for the School of Practical Science appeared on the inaugural front page, alongside many of the key issues and

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid, 170.

debates related to the future of Canadian architecture.[61] Months later, the July, 1888 issue celebrated the "very gratifying"[62] decision of Ontario Minister of Education George Ross to bring to Canada the model of formal, architectural education and training as practiced by many American colleges and universities.[63] The *CAB* predicted that without delay, [64] the School of Practical Science would adopt architectural curriculum patterned after what Laurence Veysey described as the "utilitarian university" model as established at Cornell University in New York State.[65] Founded in 1868 to function as a much more democratic institution of higher learning than Harvard or Yale, Cornell, under the guidance of its first President, Andrew D. White [1832-1918], was established to fill a broadly perceived gap in post-secondary education that lay between trade schools and pure academia.[66] Part of what Veysey identified as the pursuit of prestige – at first among academic, and then professional circles during the late nineteenth century – the establishment of utilitarian universities such as Cornell or the School of Practical Science, created an acceptable path to professional prestige outside of the traditional realms of medicine or law.[67]

Prior to George Ross' expansion of the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto to include a Department of Architecture, what had been previously accepted as architectural education in the province had been largely made up of a disjointed network of private instruction and apprenticeships. Resulting in a highly inefficient method of architectural education, lacking in cohesion or regulation, the perceived need felt among most Canadian architects was that a systematized method of

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[61] *CAB* 1, no. 1 (January, 1888): 1, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[62] *CAB* 1, no. 7 (July 1888): 4, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[63] Ibid.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Laurence R. Veysey, *Emergence of the American University* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 80-1.
[66] Ibid, 81-2.
[67] Ibid, 317-20.

state-sponsored education and training was necessary should the profession ever hope to attain the level of legitimacy and prestige it aspired to.[68] Ross' enthusiasm for implementing practical instruction in Ontario was largely formed during his many tours, between 1885 and 1886, of several institutions in the United States, including Cornell. Bolstered by his role in the founding of the OAA, Ross' belief in the power of organization, regulation, and education was shared by architects in Ontario and Quebec, the latter having formed the PQAA without benefit of such a staunch political ally. However, despite the enthusiasm with which many Canadian architects viewed the impending changes to architectural education and training in their country, the discussion quickly turned into a debate over which model was best for Canada. Would the next generation of Canadian architects be brought up following the American Beaux-Arts tradition, as the latter had adopted from France? Or, would Canada choose another model, perhaps the apprenticeship-based, Guild system, as practiced in Britain? If neither would do, as some claimed, perhaps Canada ought to create its own model, one that reflected the qualities of Canada and its population.

Beyond a sense of embarrassment and unrest common to Canadian architects and educators alike, the real consequences of the absence of a standardized system of architectural education and training had been felt in Canada for some time. The oft-discussed drainage of new talent to the United States or Britain was a reality that had many in the architectural community deeply concerned. Thus in an effort to stem the tide, reformers such as Ross strove to keep young architects and draughtsmen in the country through the creation and inclusion of technical training schools into the fold of Canadian

[68] Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, 51-2.

colleges and universities.[69] To this end, the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto and the School of Architecture at McGill University in Montreal, were both products of their time, each of their own accord working to shape the first generations of professional architects within Canada's two largest urban centres.[70] After the formation of the OAA in 1889, and the PQAA in 1890, and especially after each had ratified their respective Architects' Acts, the emphasis upon systematized education and training – necessary to gain entry into the now partially closed profession – was acutely felt among aspiring architects in Canada more than ever before.

Grassroots: The Arts and Crafts Movement and Architectural Education in Ontario

In Ontario and Quebec, and indeed for the rest Canada, the Arts and Crafts Movement as begun in Britain and taken up by the United States, had by the 1890s started to make inroads among Canadian artists, artisans, and architects. Adopted across Canada by various provincial and regional craft, trade, and cultural organizations, the relay of information was received differently by each, the manifestation of existing regional and cultural differences demonstrated in the disparities between the relationship of the OAA and PQAA to the Arts and Crafts Movement. In Ontario, with its financial, political, and cultural centre in Toronto, the Arts and Crafts Movement resonated well among the high concentration of the country's English Canadian cultural elite. While in Montreal, home of the Canadian architectural profession as located within the bounds of French Canada, the Movement was tailored to meet the demands of a population whose history involved a pluralistic reverence for the past. In both cases involving a degree of poetic licence, with English Canada's link to Britain exploited in the former, and French

[69] Ibid, 52.
[70] Ibid.

Canada's connection to New France seized upon in the latter, the malleable nature of the Arts and Crafts was bent to meet the respective demands of each province's cultural producers and consumers. In terms of the debate over the future of architectural education, these differences played out in a variety of interesting ways. The nuclei of authority in both Ontario and Quebec contained those who fell on either side of the issues facing the profession, including education, training, regulation, and most pressingly, the question of whether there could ever truly be a "Canadian" architectural profession.

Founded in 1899 by a group of like-minded, Canadian architects, the Toronto Architectural Eighteen Club, or Eighteen Club, was the brainchild of Eden Smith, its membership including a collection of Toronto's most respected architects. Joined by Edmund Burke [1850-1919], J. P. Hynes [1868-1953], J. C. B. Horwood [1864-1938], Ernest R. Rolph [1871-1958], C. H. Acton Bond [1869-1924], and a dozen others, the Eighteen Club, as a splinter group within the OAA, represented some of the finest minds in the business, their collective works including an impressive list Canadian landmarks.[71] Formed as a response to what Smith and his followers viewed as the OAA's failure to meet its core mandate – the improvement and establishment of a Canadian architectural profession – the Eighteen Club soon became the OAA's most vocal critic. Described by Simmins as "the thorn that pricked,"[72] and especially so in regards to the OAA's main goal of statutory registration, the Eighteen Club held the contrarian opinion that closing the profession would in fact be the OAA's undoing. Successful, in Simmins' estimation, of delaying the process for nearly a decade, the Eighteen Club's tenacity was well-

[71] Simmins, *Ontario Association of Architects*, 51.
[72] Ibid, 47.

known, the small, but effective group of rabble-rousers adept at keeping their views, dissensions, and active schedule, known to all that would listen.[73]

The opportunity to be heard came in early 1900, just months after the Eighteen Club's founding, upon the occasion the of the OAA's Twelfth Annual Convention. Following the introductory remarks, the OAA's members were provided with a list of goals for the coming year, including the securing of a new headquarters, the awarding of medals and prizes for outstanding work, funding for architectural scholarships, graduated examinations, and the issuing of OAA membership certificates to be hung in offices across the province.[74] Receiving an initial round of support, the "Report of the Consulting Committee" did not sit well with those present from among the ranks of the Eighteen Club. Though he first demurred, either out of genuine embarrassment on behalf of his colleagues for the harsh words of criticism he was about to level against them, or for a false sense of modesty and theatrical effect, going so far as to claim he had nothing prepared, the Eighteen Club's Eden Smith, producing a handful of rough notes from his pocket, proceeded to deliver one of the most resounding performances of his career.[75]

Encouraged to speak by esteemed Toronto architect Frank Darling [1850-1923], who reminded Smith that he was among friends and colleagues who shared he and his followers' desire to improve the profession, Smith opened his remarks with the assertion that in the twelve years since its founding, the OAA had "fail[ed] to accomplish any good results [...] the Association [having] started with entirely wrong principles."[76] Moreover, in its zeal for status above all other goals, Smith charged that the OAA had been begun

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[73] Ibid.
[74] "Ontario Association of Architects: Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Convention," *CAB* 13, no. 1 (January 1900): 9-10, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm
[75] Ibid, 11.
[76] Ibid.

for the "purpose of doing good to architects rather than to Architecture."[77] From here, Smith continued his critique of what he deemed to have been the OAA's recent history of misspent energy, stating, "[i]f instead of using every effort to make the profession a close corporation, the same energy had been applied towards making the profession better, more results would have been obtained, and in the end architects would have felt the benefits themselves."[78] More egregious still, and in fact one of the main issues of contention between the Eighteen Club and the OAA, Smith took strong objection to the latter's refusal to take an active role in the promotion of its own talent pool and the pursuit of new ideas. In particular, the OAA's decision to opt out of the recent international Arts and Crafts Exhibition that was travelling across North America, and to allow the diminutive Ontario Society of Artists to participate in its stead, was declared to have been yet another "glaring instance [...] where the Association has failed."[79] Smith was sure to make clear that owing to the OAA's inability to see the larger picture, the Eighteen Club had been forced to take up the slack, independently joining the Architectural League of America in order to gain access to a much broader audience, with a much greater schedule of exhibitions, in which members could show off their wares.[80]

Having thoroughly lambasted the committee, Smith turned his attention to the issue of architectural education, the crux, in his estimation, of the problem. Proposing that the OAA should cease all efforts towards seeking professional status – especially as Smith, in his Arts-and-Crafts-informed philosophy of design, viewed architecture as an open art, as opposed to a closed profession – he urged that the "energy of the Association

[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

be devoted for the present almost entirely to education."[81] To begin, Smith questioned the wisdom of desiring that students and members alike sit for formal examinations, when by his estimation, there had yet to be an agreed upon method of doing so.[82] On the OAA's proposal to fund scholarships and travel grants to architectural students seeking to study abroad, and as well on the possibility of awarding medals and prizes for outstanding work, Smith was unequivocally dismissive, suggesting that all such notions were "farcical" in advance of the "Association [...] providing any means of education."[83] Smith was quick to lament the "puerile and wasteful" misuse of time involved in the preparation and presentation of numerous papers on the subject of architecture, the effort expended of little educational or practical use unless conducted by those "fully competent" to do so.[84] In terms of a solution to the problems facing architectural education in Canada, Smith argued in favour of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, in which students were exposed to theory, examinations, and professional mentoring and supervision through a mixture of studio – or atelier – time, in addition to apprenticeships within offices of good standing.[85] Then, and only after a good deal of time had passed, and the first few cohorts of new architects had been tested for their mettle, could the OAA, according to Smith, begin to once again entertain the notion of seeking state-sanctioned regulation and autonomy through the closing of the profession – if by this time it was even still desirable.[86]

Despite his frankness, or perhaps because of it, Smith's remarks resonated far beyond the membership of the OAA. For while it was recorded by the *CAB* that

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[81] Ibid, 12.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

following a handful of meek rebuttals, the majority had accepted his criticisms with grace, there were others, including a visiting correspondent from the Boston-based *American Architect and Building News*, who found a great deal of truth in his words. Recounting for an American audience the extraordinary events that had recently transpired up in Toronto, the paper reported that the OAA was an organization in crisis, the recent convention tantamount to a referendum on the "existence or extinction of the Society."[87] By far, the highlight of the event, as the article's headline suggests, was the so-called "assault" by the Eighteen Club upon the OAA, the more "manly" among the latter able to swallow the criticisms levelled against them, going so far as to accept responsibility for their failings and to vow to change course for the better.[88] "The Eighteen club has probably saved the life the Association," the article continued, the long list of criticisms expressed by Smith having effectively exposed the many weaknesses of the OAA and whole of the Canadian architectural profession.[89] The best possible outcome, according to the paper, would be if the Council agreed to "gracefully hand over the Association's affairs to the Eighteen Club and for the Association to elect members of the Eighteen Club only to the new Council."[90] The damage done, Smith's words, and especially the American take on the affair, would have been devastating to the OAA, their decade-long march to legitimacy and public esteem demolished in a single blow.

A few months after the convention, Smith was invited to Philadelphia to speak in front of the Architectural League of America, which the Eighteen Club had recently joined on its own initiative following the refusal of the OAA. Speaking soon after his

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[87] "Annual Convention of the Ontario Association of Architects – Assault on its Methods by the Eighteen Club," *American Architect and Building News*, 67/1262 (1900): 67.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid, 68.

widely-received criticism of the OAA, Smith took the opportunity to add a significant layer of Arts-and-Crafts-informed context, particularly in regards to his commentary on the state of architectural education. Borrowing from Lethaby, a central figure in the British Arts and Crafts Movement, as well as a conservationist, SPAB member, and friend of Morris, Shaw, and Webb, Smith evoked Lethaby's conceptualization of architecture as "the harmonious association of all the arts."[91] Taken directly from Lethaby's aforementioned article in *The Quest*,[92] Smith's willingness to similarly frame architecture as the master of all the arts, demonstrated his strong connection to the core principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Conceptualized thus in the context of the Medieval craft guild system of education, apprenticeship, and professional practice, Smith's views on architectural education were heavily influenced by Lethaby. Moreover, Smith's views on the professionalization debate were similarly shaped by Lethaby, the latter's contention that "the architect must be the man who has gone through the shops and the masons' or carpenters' guild, and is elected 'Master' by the suffrage of those who know what good workmanship is,"[93] helping frame the former's views of what he understood to be the organic, democratic process of becoming a craftsman.

Viewed in such a way, formalized architectural education, training, and professionalization, were contrary to the spirit of the Medieval craft guild system as supported by the adherents of the Arts and Crafts Movement. This belief in turn, provided a great deal of support to the Arts and Crafts-inspired conceptualization of architecture as an open art rather than a closed profession. This being said, Smith was willing to accept the realities of the situation, admitting here, and in his original remarks, that a mixture of

[91] Smith, "Architectural Education," 109.
[92] Lethaby, "Arts and the Function of Guilds."
[93] Ibid.

theoretical and practical education, supported by a concurrent program of studio and apprenticeship placements, would in time go a long way towards setting Canadian architecture upon a path to success – and if desired, professionalization.[94] To make this possible, Smith believed that beyond concerns over curriculum, success through education hinged upon a clear understanding and respect for science and art.

Described by Smith as men of science during the Middle Ages, architects had purportedly once been naturally adept at the practical side of their profession, able to balance their art with a learned appreciation of the properties, peculiarities, and limits of the many mediums at their disposal.[95] Forced to play catch up at a time when new technologies, building materials, and construction methods were appearing almost daily, today's architects in Smith's estimation were in great need of a well-rounded education, one that placed equal value on art and science. Harkening to his Arts and Crafts roots, Smith added that as a tool of the working man, a thorough understanding of science could help reverse the abuses its application had wrought upon craftsmanship, arguing that "if the element of quality in workmanship or art has been brutalized in the name of science we have to find out how to debrutalize it."[96] Furthermore, under the auspices of scientifically-inclined institutions such as the School of Practical Science, students of architecture would be provided the tools necessary to foster an appreciation of "the nature and functions of the materials with which he expresses himself."[97] In other words, should the OAA, Eighteen Club, or any other architectural association desire to improve the quality of education for its newest members, the problem needed to be considered from

[94] Smith, "Architectural Education," 109.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.

an Arts and Crafts perspective. Thus to be successful, such a program would be one that allowed for an organic blossoming of talent underscored by a comprehensive program of theory and practice in harmony with the dual requirements of the arts and the sciences.

The Eighteen Club provided the OAA with some colour, the Club's dissenting views on the nature of registration shaped by its underlying belief that architecture was an art, and not, as viewed by the majority of the OAA, a profession which could be closed to the public by means of registration and entrance exams.[98] The debate which had raged in architectural circles in Britain and the United States – "architecture as an art" vs. "architecture as a profession" – had found its way into Canada through the rabble-rousing ambitions of the Eighteen Club, which during its thirteen-year existence, had proved to be both the OAA's greatest champion and greatest challenger.[99] The importation of the professionalization debate into the Canadian architectural consciousness was according to Simmins, "[T]he Eighteen Club's most outstanding achievement."[100] Eden Smith and Edmund Burke, the Club's founders – the latter to hold the position of OAA president no less than three times – were convinced that in order for Canadian architecture to thrive, it needed to clear its mind of the narrow distinction of "profession," and instead place its energy behind the creation of a sound system of architectural education and training. Furthermore, by breaking ranks and pursuing entrance into the Architectural League of America, and either entering or hosting several exhibitions, the Eighteen Club demonstrated their open-mindedness and desire to take risks, something that the OAA, in its preoccupation with closing the profession, had lost sight of.

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[98] Simmins, *Ontario Association of Architects*, 48-9.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid, 48.

Over the course of its thirteen-year run, the Eighteen Club, which renamed itself the Toronto Society of Architects in 1909, produced six exhibitions. Starting with its First Exhibition in 1901, the Eighteen Club set out to make a statement, contributing no less than two hundred and fifty-five pieces out of a total three hundred and ninety-eight.[101] The Catalogue of the First Exhibition included a brief essay on the architectural history of Toronto, depicting key historic buildings dating from the arrival of Sir John Graves Simcoe in 1791, to the completion of New City Hall in 1900.[102] Revelatory of the relative newness of Toronto, in many cases the progeny of an original family belonging to this or that ancestral home were said to be alive and well. Beyond the historical record, what was most noteworthy about the essay were the subtle omissions of fact. Architects of Canadian or British descent were named and described as such, while those from the United States were either described as anonymous, or left out altogether. The new and highly controversial Legislative Buildings were mentioned a handful of times, while Buffalo architect R. A. Waite, the man who according to the OAA and *CAB* had single-handedly scandalized the profession in Ontario just a decade before, received no mention[103] These omissions, the result of the Eighteen Club's desire to avoid opening old wounds among the OAA, or offending their new friends within the Architectural League of America, highlighted the degree to which the upstart Club wished to find its place, free from the historic divides that had convinced them to go it alone in the first place.

The Catalogue of the First Exhibition also contained an annotated list of the relevant architectural organizations, clubs, and schools for Ontario. Once again, a subtle papering over of ideological discrepancies between the OAA and the Eighteen Club was

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[101] Ibid, 51-3.
[102] *First Exhibition* (Toronto: Toronto Architectural Eighteen Club, 1901), 8-11.
[103] Ibid, 10.

evident. The Eighteen Club cited the OAA's main objects as, "the advancement of architecture, the better protection of the public interests in the erection of buildings, and the securing of a standard of efficiency in the persons practicing the profession of architecture."[104] Though these goals were in large part those professed by the OAA, one needed to look no further than the recent spat between they and the Eighteen Club to see that on every one of these premises, the two entities did not see eye to eye. Further proof of tactful subterfuge came with the description of the OAA's practices regarding education and training. The School of Practical Science, for example, was said to be in the process of happily adopting the atelier – or studio system, into its regular curriculum.[105] The desire to instruct students using the French-American mentorship model, though shared by several at the OAA, was a desire much more firmly held by the Eighteen Club, who in fact wished to take it one step further, through the partial readoption of the Medieval-era craft guild system. Treading carefully, a fine line was traced between the sensibilities of all involved, the Eighteen Club keen to ensure that their debut succeeded in promoting their cause along with that of their parent organization, and the Canadian architectural profession as a whole.

By the time of the Eighteen Club's Fifth Exhibition in 1909, upon the occasion of their rebranding as the Toronto Society of Architects [TSA], the pretence of modesty had been abandoned, the revamped organization no longer self-described as a handful of like-minded young architects, whose "weekly luncheon[s], chiefly for the promotion of good fellowship," [106] were carried on with "very little business." [107] The TSA introduced

[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid, 12.
[106] Ibid, 13.
[107] Ibid, 14.

themselves with a rejuvenated sense of focus and determination, citing their support of, "the cause of Architecture, rather than that of Architects, [...] the founding of Societies by reason of their ability and reputation and not by examination," and their continued opposition to the, "idea of a close[d] corporation of Architects," in the name of public safety.[108] Placing the interests of architecture ahead of architects, a move the Eighteen Club had once declared contradictory to the mission of the OAA, the purist approach, if it can be considered thus, provided the smaller organization with a lofty, idyllic goal – the emancipation of architecture from human intervention. Furthermore, the TSA's controversial stance on architectural entry requirements, with a clear bias towards natural artistic ability over what could be learned by rote, further set them apart.[109] The veil cast aside, the TSA introduced themselves to the North American architectural community with a renewed boldness of spirit, the advantages of time and hindsight allowing for a much greater degree of latitude than only a few years previous.

The increasingly ambitious exhibitions, each outdoing the last, culminated in the Sixth "All-Canadian" Exhibition of 1912, which sought to showcase the very best of Canadian architecture. Having consistently dwarfed the volume of entries into each of their previous exhibitions, a feat made even more impressive by the fact that the TSA was the only Canadian outfit within the thirteen-member, Architectural League of America, their sixth and final exhibition sought to cement Canada's status as an architectural powerhouse. Promoted as an "All-Canadian" affair:

> This Exhibition, the Sixth held by the Toronto Society of Architects, is composed of the work of Canadian architects exclusively. We are convinced that Canadian problems in Architecture, can be dealt with by those who are themselves Canadians, familiar with the National and local requirements of their Country, having their Country's interests at heart, and imbued with their

[108] *Fifth Exhibition Catalogue* (Toronto: Toronto Society of Architects, 1909), 8.
[109] Ibid.

> Country's spirit. This Exhibition will prove that our Architectural problems are being fairly faced, intelligently studied and worthily solved.[110]

Featuring a mix of Beaux-Arts banks and commercial buildings alongside numerous Arts-and-Crafts-inspired churches, university buildings, and private residences, the Sixth Exhibition catalogue demonstrated that Canadian architecture was equally comfortable with the gamut of popular, modern tastes, the promotion of English, American, and European forms all proudly displayed side-by-side.[111] That all of these styles and more could be done with precision, skill, and copious good taste, was a great source of pride for the TSA, each artfully-designed rendering serving to strengthen the case for self-sufficiency and the promotion of a discernibly "Canadian" architectural profession.

Eden Smith and his followers aspired to a Canadian architectural "profession" – to use the term loosely – which was artistically, ideologically, and nationally self-sufficient. To this end, the TSA's declaration that "Canadian problems in Architecture, can be dealt with by those who are themselves Canadians,"[112] went a long way towards aligning the Canadian architectural profession with the inherently nationalistic side of the Arts and Crafts Movement. For though the *CAB*, OAA, and Eighteen Club under Smith, had each been searching for a method by which the profession could come into its own, there had to date not been so succinctly put a manifesto of this kind for Canadian architectural self-sufficiency and invention. Thus, the exhibition catalogues provide a record of how in Ontario, the struggle to express Canadian architectural identity and style was fought, Smith and the Eighteen Club's efforts to promote the best the country had to offer, a testament to the belief that the profession would soon be able to stand on its own.

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[110] *Sixth Exhibition* (Toronto: Toronto Society of Architects, 1912), 9.
[111] Simmins, *Ontario Association of Architects*, 53-4.
[112] *Sixth Exhibition*, 9.

By promoting the potential benefits of a Canadian-based, locally crafted national architecture, the Eighteen Club had essentially turned on its head the close-minded, protectionist approach of the OAA. Furthermore, in their refusal to accept as sound policy the instinct to professionalize first and ask questions later, the Eighteen Club had levelled a formidable challenge to the authority of Ontario's architectural establishment. In short order, the many missteps of the OAA had been laid bare by the TSA, their refusal to join the Architectural League of America, their failure to gain the right to brand themselves "Architects," and their unyielding desire to close the profession ahead of all other concerns, leaving them exposed to the ridicule of architectural circles from Britain to the United States. By declining to join the Architectural League of America in 1899, the OAA had, "miss[ed] the advantages to be obtained by being in such intimate touch with architects of all the different States of America."[113] With their failure to gain from the Province the right to the title of "Architect," the OAA had obtained for its members the dubious consolatory prize of, "the right to call themselves 'Registered Architects,' which distinction very few, if any, of their members in the last ten or fifteen years seem desirous of advertising."[114] On the topic of examinations, the TSA viewed those used by the OAA as damaging their cause, "put[ting] before the public such an imperfect idea of an architect that it became a serious obstacle in the way of obtaining a system of architectural education."[115] Put plainly, the TSA, the club of eighteen which had not long ago been but a modest force for change, had left the OAA behind, a fate which if they were not careful, would soon be shared with the entire Canadian architectural profession.

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[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

The history of the Eighteen Club highlights their ability to fit into the larger North American architectural community. In 1907, the Eighteen Club underwent its first major reorganization, complete with a new constitution and brief name change, the Toronto Architectural Club's founding member, Mr. J. P. Hynes, elected president of the Architectural League of America in that year as well.[116] Meanwhile, in early 1908, the OAA made its second attempt to gain from the Province the right to full statutory registration, which if successful would have seen the demise of the universally derided, "Registered Architect" in favour of the far more desirous title of "Architect."[117] Under direction from Smith, Horwood, and Hynes, the Toronto Architectural Club convinced the University of Toronto to reject the OAA's request to conduct its own examinations.[118] This in turn, pushed both the Minister of Education, Dr. Pyne [1853-1931], and the University of Toronto, to cast serious doubt and opposition upon the OAA's request. The Bill was withdrawn, the issue to be shelved, "till the architects should agree."[119] Without consensus, without a singular vision of what it meant to be an architect, it would be a long time, not until 1931, before the OAA would finally get its wish.

The TSA, best remembered as the Eighteen Club, disbanded shortly after the Sixth "All-Canadian" Exhibition of 1912. Their final showing, featuring no less than three hundred and seven hand-picked examples of leading edge Canadian architecture, served as a reminder of just how far the Club had come in its relatively short history. By a significant margin, the artistic ideals of the Arts and Crafts Movement made up the majority of the selections offered for public consideration. Tudor beams, leaded glass,

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[116] Ibid, 11.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ibid.

and oaken inglenooks, fill the pages, juxtaposed to the many examples of modern office towers with their stately edifices. Here, the modern and antimodern were able to co-exist, it not at all anachronistic to observers at the time, to see modern office buildings, built with the latest construction methods, and adorned with the most au courant Beaux-Arts flourishes, considered alongside the early twentieth century's take on the traditional, English cottage. Thus, both built forms could be considered, from the vantage point of the time, to be equally modern, progressive examples of the "new" architecture.

The Beaux-Arts, Art Nouveau, and the Arts and Crafts were all equally "new." The turn of the last century was a time of fervent, widespread experimentation, with new innovations in everything from construction, fashion, music, film, and dance, all undergoing large, rapid transformations. Similar to all trends, some endured, and others did not. The same was true for architecture. While Art Nouveau proved to be but a fleeting affair with the naturalistic tendrils and delicate grace of Lalique dragonflies and Tiffany glass, Art Deco endured well into the Postwar Era. In this vein, the concept of what was "modern" or "antimodern" was equally malleable. The Arts and Crafts, therefore, being equal parts design and philosophy, was similarly able to endure, astride both sides of the ideological divide. Simultaneously modern and antimodern, the Craft ideal was able to satisfy the domestic desires of a generation of Canadians. For those who lived on the edge of the urban/suburban split, their newly-built houses provided an agreeable mix of modern comforts and design that were intended to make one feel at home. Setting the Eighteen Club apart, their commitment not only to craftsmanship, style, and material aestheticism, but as well to the many deeper facets of the Movement, including education, training, and the definition of the architect as "master of all the arts,"

were informed by a set of ideals which the OAA either could, or would not embrace. The Eighteen Club, simply put, was much better at being what the OAA ought to have been, but could never be – a progressive collection of architects whose goals and actions sought to place the advancement of architecture ahead of the advancement of architects.

The Arts and Crafts Movement within Ontario had its greatest champion in the Eighteen Club, which upon its reorganization as the TSA, was more than willing to showcase their many Arts-and-Crafts-inspired designs as proof that in Canada, the art of architecture was not just keeping up, but in many instances, setting the pace. The ambitious goals of the organization fit nicely within those of the Craft ideal from which it took its cue. The desire to break the mould, to adapt for Canada a style of architecture that befit its unique geographical qualities, and made the most of the country's local talent, represented an opportunity for the Arts and Crafts Movement to flourish. Introduced by the *CAB* via the efforts of the most pioneering members of the OAA, and brought to fruition through its promotion and exposure by the Eighteen Club, the entry of the Arts and Crafts Movement into Canadian architecture was all but inevitable. The battle cry of architectural protectionism, fostered by acute concerns over foreign competition and favouritism paired with a sense of public malaise in regards to the profession, had necessitated that architects not only band together, but also find a form of architecture that could be made sacred by means of its own unique quality and character. The Arts and Crafts Movement offered Canadian architects just that, a style of architecture that embraced local materials, employed the skills of local craftspeople, and benefited immensely from the picturesque setting offered by Canada's distinctive geography. For Ontario's urban architects, especially those in Toronto, the rise of the

garden suburb, including High Park, Rosedale, and Wychwood, where Smith and others made themselves known, offered the optimal setting in which the Craft ideal, and thus a "Canadian" architectural style, could take root. If it can be argued that the actions of the OAA and *CAB* helped guide the Arts and Crafts Movement towards the edge of the architectural consciousness of Ontario, it is equally fair to credit the Eighteen Club with carrying the Craft ideal across the threshold and onto centre stage.

Top-Down: The Arts and Crafts Movement and Architectural Education in Quebec

In many ways, the development of the architectural profession in Quebec mirrored that of Ontario. The PQAA was founded in 1890, one year after the OAA, its charter and constitution essentially a carbon copy of that used in Ontario. Based in Montreal, the PQAA consisted of a near fifty-fifty split of English and French Canadians, with a slight edge given towards the former. Of the thirty-four listed members reported in the *CAB* upon the PQAA's debut in 1890, there were eighteen English Canadians and sixteen French Canadians.[120] Despite the near parity present within the association, the favouritism given towards the English-Canadian contingent was evident in the decision to adopt the English-language *CAB* as their official mouthpiece, just as the OAA had done the year before. Furthermore, it must be noted here that the PQAA was not alone in terms of its Anglo-centric focus, the professional, dominant classes, even in Quebec, from the late nineteenth century up to the mid-twentieth, skewing decidedly English. Thus similarly aligned, and equally urban-centric, its members met regularly, discussed the issues of the day, and had their meeting minutes published in the *CAB*. Similar as well, was the early failure met by the PQAA at the hands of the Province to gain the right to

[120] "Organization of the Province of Quebec Association of Architects," *CAB* 3, no. 10 (October 1890): 112, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm

statutory registration. Free of the resistance represented by the Eighteen Club, the PQAA's right to professional status, though delayed by the Province on its own accord, came two decades sooner than it did for the OAA in Ontario, arriving in Quebec in 1909. Thus also forced to make do with the much-maligned title of "Registered Architect," the PQAA's eventual granting of the coveted status of "Architect," served as a rallying point and source of inspiration among architectural organizations across the country.

Beyond similarities in organizational structure and relationship to the realm of professional architecture, Quebec differed in its approach to architecture in three significant ways. The first and most obvious difference was the extent to which several among the majority of English-Canadian architects took Quebec's unique, French heritage into consideration, taking cues from the historic quarters of both Quebec City and Montreal, and from the old rural villages spread along the St. Lawrence. The second major variance with what can be considered the "Ontario Model," was Quebec's approach to architectural education and training. The "Quebec Model," though still largely centred upon technical colleges including the École Polytechnique, or increasingly, within academic institutions, such as the School of Architecture at McGill, was more successful in its recruitment and overall effectiveness, especially when paired with the French-inspired, atelier, or studio system of apprenticeship. Thirdly, the Quebec Model differed in that instead of mirroring the grassroots ascent of ideas as exemplified by Smith and the Eighteen Club, moving up through the OAA, *CAB*, and onwards up to the realms of higher education, and finally the Province, the seat of power in Quebec sat squarely with the Chair of the Architecture at McGill University. Thus from the time of Percy Nobbs' appointment in 1903, the Quebec Model can be said to have adopted a top-

down approach, the dissemination of architectural wisdom and authority flowing down from the prolific architect, educator, and orator, making its way to his numerous students and colleagues. Authoritative, academic, and Anglo-centric, albeit wish a tint of romanticized French-Canadian historicism, the Quebec Model suited its time and context, the influence of Nobbs and others in his circle, to have a profound effect upon the shaping of Canada's complex, modern, architectural traditions and character.

Setting the foundation for what was to come, Crossman credits the arrival of Lord Dufferin to Quebec City in 1872 as being one of the main catalysts behind both the rise of the architectural profession in Quebec, and subsequent search for a national style.[121] Lord Dufferin's pioneering, preservationist efforts to save Old Quebec City's gates and fortifications served to initiate Canada to the belief that there was indeed a national form of architecture to which to aspire.[122] The medievalist, French architecture of Old Quebec City provided the canvas upon which new architecture in the province could be drawn. Placing the heart of French Canada at the centre of Canada's architectural genesis, Crossman connects the region's strong nationalist bent with the desire to forge a truly "Canadian" style of architecture. "In the absence of a Canadian style," the author contends, "it was no easy matter to design buildings that were commodious, fashionable, and distinctively Canadian."[123] Architects were handpicked by the Anglo-Irish-descended Lord Dufferin [1826-1902] to fashion Quebec City into a picturesque masterpiece of heavy-cut stone, fanciful turrets, and soaring church spires.[124] Thus from the heavily Anglo-centric echelons of power that dominated Quebec during the late nineteenth

[121] Crossman, *Architecture in Transition*, 110-12.
[122] Ibid, 110.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Ibid.

century, disseminated from taste-makers such as Lord Dufferin down through the PQAA, and onwards, the case was made that if Canada lacked a national style, it need look no further than the handsome, oft-mythologized, historic ruins of New France.

In many ways, the efforts to restore the city resulted in the promotion of a distinctly "French" architectural character, albeit one rooted largely within a modified, Anglicized vision of Old Quebec which would have differed considerably from anything built during the time of New France. First expressed during the rebuilding of Quebec City's stone ramparts and city gates, and continued through the restorations of churches and other structures across the province, the preservation efforts carried out in Quebec involved a varying degree of poetic licence. Demonstrated on a grand scale during the construction of the famous, Chateau Frontenac, designed by the English-born but American in education and practice architect Bruce Price [1845-1903] in 1892, the stone, castle-like chateau signified the arrival of a new form of national architecture. The advent of the "Chateau Style," as borrowed from the French Renaissance, quickly evolved to become a sort of architectural signature within Quebec, the style becoming the model for several of Canada's grand railway hotels.[125] In Montreal, the architectural foundations laid in Quebec City soon reached Canada's then largest urban centre, albeit modified by Nobbs and his colleagues in the PQAA, to meet the demands of the modern metropolis.

Further complicating the architectural makeup of Quebec, and Montreal in particular, the linguistic, cultural, and class divisions present along the city's east-west divide provided a unique situation. In the more affluent west end of the city, especially in Mount Royal and Westmount, the majority of Anglophone professionals and politicians had beautiful homes built for themselves and their families which overlooked the

[125] Ibid, 113-14.

predominantly working class, French-Catholic citizenry of Montreal. Thus it was the case that these composite creations – comprised of a mix of French and English stylistic cues – and designed by Montreal-based architects trained in the French, atelier system, and educated at the English-speaking McGill University under the supervision of a Scotsman, were successfully brought to fruition. Indeed it was the case that under the instruction of the Scottish-born Nobbs, that during the early twentieth century, the architectural community of Montreal underwent one of its most significant transformations.

Arriving in 1903 to his post at McGill University, Professor Nobbs parachuted into the Canadian architectural profession late enough to have missed the earliest battles waged over education and professionalization, while still being early enough to make a considerable mark upon the future of Canadian architecture. Entering into the conversation after it had begun, Nobbs was quick to catch up, his position and skill as both an educator and practicing architect, granting him access to the full spectrum of the profession, from laymen to literati. A prolific writer and sought-after public speaker, Nobbs' long list of commentary upon all things architecture, design, education, and the quest for a Canadian style, spanned over five decades, of which the first three-and-a-half were spent at the helm of the profession from the vantage point of his position as Chair and Professor of Architecture. A central figure in the early history of the Canadian architectural profession, and a founding member of Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement, Nobbs' ability to straddle multiple spheres of influence made up a key part of his role as a shaper of the country's modern, twentieth-century identity.

Having arrived by way of Edinburgh and St. Petersburg, and as a student of the Scottish Arts and Crafts tradition as established by his mentor, Robert Lorimer [1864-

1929], Nobbs was no stranger to the struggles of nation-building via art and architecture, his writings on the subject revealing a mind ready to accept the challenges that lay ahead for his adoptive city, province, and nation. Delivering a set of remarks on "Architectural Education in Canada," in Toronto, as a guest speaker of the OAA in 1910, Nobbs was quick to acknowledge his privileged position as an insider within the highest ranks of the profession, his invitation resting largely upon "the virtue of [his] post at McGill University."[126] Moving onto the subject of education, Nobbs sought to draw a divide between what he deemed a "School of Art" and a "Department of Architecture:"

> By school of art we mean a place where young people (for the most part of inferior education, I am sorry to say), are taught to be very skilful at drawing in various media [...] and at designing imaginary buildings and representing their intentions in black and white; a school of art is, in fact, a place where people learn a good deal of sleight of hand and sleight of eye, and very little about things in general, past, present and yet to be.[127]

Critical of American institutions for leaning too heavily upon the "School of Art" side of the equation, Nobbs suggested that by contrast, a "Department of Architecture" has no business teaching drawing, and must rely instead upon draughtsmanship and design.[128] Described by Nobbs as the place where, "later in life [...] a man begins to think for himself," architectural schools were argued to be where one's journey into architecture truly began, drawing a "matter for the school of art and the office to teach."[129]

Delving deeper into his theory of architectural education, Nobbs proceeded to lay out the blueprints of a successful Department of Architecture, such an institution to be comprised of six areas of study – Design, Aesthetic, Archaeology, Science, Construction,

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[126] Percy E. Nobbs, "Architectural Education in Canada," *Proceedings of the Ontario Association of Architects* 10 (1910): 81-2.
[127] Ibid, 82.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.

and Professional Practice.[130] Design, according to Nobbs, could "of course, only be taught 'by the pencil,' [...] by people engaged in the active practice of their profession," the Beaux-Arts method, described as "only the best way of running design classes [featuring] sketches done without assistance, elaborated under criticism and guidance."[131] In terms of aesthetic, Nobbs argued that the "things that really matter for the expression of sentiment in building (and that is a fair definition of architecture) are proportion and scale above all things."[132] Furthermore, Nobbs demonstrated his Arts and Crafts roots with his aesthetic philosophy of design, stating his belief that "pure design in nature and in art and ornament, with its moral or significant aspect and its material logic, throw light on the evolution of architectural form."[133] Moving on to archaeology, and in particular to what he defined as architectural influences, Nobbs used the example of revivals as being among the key cultural cues from which various nations at various times have traditionally relied upon, whether they be Greek, Roman, Italian, French, or English.[134] Canada being no exception to the rule when it came to its as of yet historic propensity towards revivalism, was reported by Nobbs to have taken its cues from Britain and France, his encouragement for his adoptive country to seek every opportunity for invention, part of a refrain that he would repeat over the course of his career.[135]

On to the remaining three elements argued to be essential within a well-rounded Department of Architecture – Science, Construction, and Professional Practice – Nobbs was less precise, his views on the practical side of architectural education likely shaped

[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid, 83.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.
[134] Ibid, 84.
[135] Ibid.

by his role as an academic, his private practice, though prolific in its own right, not nearly as often the subject of his many articles and public speaking engagements. On science, Nobbs argued that while an understanding of the basics was necessary, technical knowledge on the whole was not a key concern, "science for an architect [...] not a very serious affair."[136] Similar to science, Nobbs argued that it was essential for architects to understand the basics of construction as a precursor to success, the latter described as "the architect's branch of applied science."[137] Likened to one's ability to read and write, construction was said to form the foundation of an architect's ability to design, a working knowledge of the various properties and limitations of different materials necessary for success. Lastly, professional practice was equated by Nobbs with one's ability to conduct oneself in a gentlemanly manner, a skill in his opinion that came more naturally to those endowed with a university education than the raw apprentice or tradesman.[138] Through time and practice however, one could master a professional, courteous manner, and learn "how to say what has to be said, briefly and in order and once only."[139]

Nobbs' educational blueprint differed in a few key ways to that expressed by Smith and the Eighteen Club, thus serving to delineate the Ontario and Quebec Models of architectural education along distinct lines. Regarding design and aesthetic, Nobbs relied more heavily upon theoretical, academically-based instruction than did Smith, the former aligned with a more prescribed system of graduated instruction, in which every skill related to architecture could be taught. This ran contrary to Smith's conceptualization of architecture as an art, success said to be owed in equal measure to education and training

[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid, 85.
[139] Ibid.

as it was to natural ability and talent. In terms of archaeology, Nobbs and Smith agreed upon the historic and continued relevance of revivals, just as they concurred in regards to the pressing necessity of invention should the Canadian architectural profession wish to truly set itself apart. Here, however, while Smith argued that the English tradition represented the best model from which to proceed, Nobbs made the case for a more culturally complex, regionalized architectural tradition that included both former colonial powers, thus creating a Canadian composite of English and French design.[140] Moving into practical considerations, Nobbs' relatively passive stance on the importance of science, construction, and professional practice, would have been cause for concern for Smith, running contrary as it did to the latter's firm belief in the importance of scientific knowledge and technical competency as the basis for success in architecture. Finally, in regards to professionalism, and in particular, to the debate that was then swirling around the issue of professionalization, Smith and Nobbs were very much aligned, both in agreement that their colleagues not be too hasty to put the cart before the horse.

Hence, in spite of their differences, Smith and Nobbs' views were not wholly incompatible. In many ways, they wanted to solve the same problems faced by their profession, albeit by subtly, yet importantly different means. Where both were most in synch, however, was not in their explicit views on architecture or education, but in their shared belief in the founding principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement as a guide for Canada in its quest to forge a national style. Commenting upon the subject of "University Education in Architecture"[141] in 1925, Nobbs' views on the relevancy of the Movement's

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[140] Percy E. Nobbs, "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada: Part 2. Modernity," *JRAIC* 7, no. 9 (September 1930): 315.
[141] Percy E. Nobbs, "University Education in Architecture," Reprinted from the *JRAIC*, (March-April – May-June 1925): 5.

reverence for material and aesthetic honesty through design was demonstrated through his own words of praise for the wisdom of its founders. "The most precious thing in the English tradition of our time," according to Nobbs, in reference to the role of ornament and decoration within architecture, "is the material sensitiveness of which William Morris and Professor W. R. Lethaby have been exponents."[142] Recalling his common refrain regarding the importance of material honesty and craftsmanship as agents of design and the divination of national styles, Nobbs once again hit upon the same note:

> The artist's approach to the study of ornament and decoration is through craft and trade and materials – granite remains granite, whether in Egypt or Quebec – whether 1900 B.C. or 1900 A.D., and chisels, brushes, hammers and modelling tools remain more potent than historical knowledge in the determination of detailed form.[143]

Thus aligned with Smith's belief in the potential for the Arts and Crafts Movement to act as a guide for the Canadian architectural profession and the creation of a national style, the case was made by Nobbs that in lieu of a centuries-long architectural tradition – at least from a Western standpoint – Canada's architects would have to rely heavily upon the wealth of materials at their disposal. Adding to their palette equal amounts of extra colouring from their supposedly shared northern climate, geography, and common English – and for Nobbs, also French – colonial, cultural inheritance, Canada's architects were argued to be in a unique position to shape the character of their country.

In terms of architectural education, this unique set of circumstances had for Nobbs produced in his home province of Quebec, an opportunity to express for Canada a new type of architecture that would speak to the nation's distinctive cultural milieu. For his students, and for architectural education within Canada's then most prestigious academic institution and largest metropolis, this plurality of influences, shaded deeply by Nobbs'

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[142] Ibid.
[143] Ibid.

adherence to the Arts and Crafts Movement, and especially the more nationalistic depths of its Scottish variant, maintained a significant role within Canadian architecture. Fascinated by the perceived quaintness of rural Quebec, among the historic cottages and farmhouses that populated the countryside, Nobbs, like Lord Dufferin and the generation of architects that had participated in the rebuilding of Old Quebec, found no end of inspiration among the remnants of New France. Writing for *Country Life* in 1923, Nobbs expounded upon the rich cultural heritage bestowed by New France, going to great detail on the many architectural inheritances from which Canadian architects could benefit:

> For house building purposes there are many Canadas, and the older ones did support embryonic indigenous traditions, but these are not really alive to-day, though one short half century ago French Canadians built with roofs over 45° and English Canadians with roofs under 45° in pitch, and the French used folding casements, opening in, and the English the sliding sash, and all naturally as when they used the word 'horse' or '*cheval*' to designate a beast of burden.[144]

By making reference to the existence of "many Canadas," and "indigenous traditions," the latter in reference to Nobbs' romantically-tinted view of early French Canadians, Nobbs was highlighting the extent to which he prescribed to the Arts and Crafts-based theory of cultural genesis within architectural traditions and styles, mirroring similar beliefs as espoused by Pugin and Morris a generation prior. In terms of the effect such a nuanced conceptualization of Canada's architectural heritage could have upon the future of the profession, complicated as it was by the addition of a strong French-Canadian narrative that in essence demanded a provincial, or even regional, understanding of the Canadian architectural landscape, Nobbs' contribution to the field cannot be overstated.

From the vantage point of domestic architecture, upon which this dissertation primarily focuses, the ramifications of Nobbs' desire to view Canadian architecture as a pluralistic combination of regional and linguistic components are similarly paramount,

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[144] Percy Nobbs, "Some Developments in Canadian Architecture," *Country Life*, January, 1923, 36.

adding to the ideological divide between the Ontario and Quebec Models. Furthermore, adding a great deal of character to Nobbs' influence upon the future of architectural education, and thus the direction of the profession as a whole, his stated reverence for the principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement served to align him to a vision of Canada that despite its cultural and regional differences, could be effectively made whole given enough time.[145] Repeating his oft-stated belief in the transformative powers of climate and geography to shape architectural traditions – especially domestic ones – Nobbs's views on the subject were once more brought to bear in his 1923 *Country Life* article:

> If Canadian architecture in general has not as yet attained to any great distinctiveness of character, climate, the great solvent in the evolution of all external building forms, will in time disintegrate the immigrant traditions, as it disintegrates the immigrant's costume and dietary; but as there are many climates in Canada, all rigorous in one way or another, climate will be a support to provincialism, at least in the matter of house building.[146]

However, despite all references to provincialism in Canadian architecture, Nobbs ended the piece on a much more resolute note, assuring readers that though "there are many types of Canadian domestic architecture to-day [...] they all have something in common. Very un-English as they appear to the Englishman, it is essentially an English something that unites them." Whatever this "English something" was, whether it be materials, aesthetics, rooflines, or window arrangements, it would appear that in line with the prevailing Anglo-Canadian vision of Canada that existed during the early twentieth century, Nobbs was, despite his many inclinations to the contrary, part of the general consensus as to which direction Canadian architecture would follow in the years to come.

Allowing for what Nobbs and the majority of Canadian architects would have foreseen as the continued commercial success of English traditions, Nobbs' latent concession to the "English something" that united the country can be best understood as a

[145] Ibid, 41.
[146] Ibid, 35.

compromise of utility. His position of authority allowing for a great deal of pragmatism, Nobbs, though by no means immune to an ardent sense of idealism, was equally keen for the development of Canadian architecture to proceed organically, its future to be determined by a broad spectrum of influences. Of these, Nobbs believed strongly in those related to what he understood as Canada's dualistic, French-and-English heritage, its northern climate, and its New World predilection for invention. Deeply rooted in the Arts and Crafts, and coloured by his affinity for modernity and experimentation, Nobbs' vision for the future of the Canadian architectural profession and the traditions it had yet to yield, was one defined as a composite "Canadian" character. Traditionalist, yet modern, tied to the land, yet free to roam, steeped in Englishness, yet flavoured by a strong French, Continental sensibility, Canada's nascent architectural style owed as much to its creators as it did the land that had inspired them.

In his February, 1904 *CAB* article, "The Delineation of Architecture," Professor Nobbs expressed his views in lecture format on subjects including, the drawing skills of young architects, the Beaux-Arts school, and the cultural differences in artistic ability and sensibility between French and English architects.[147] To illustrate his points, Nobbs focused upon what he believed to be the best method for accurately and honestly portraying architectural structures and details on paper. Nobbs compared the aesthetic quality of three common mediums of artistic reproduction – pen-and-ink line drawings, pencil wash drawings, and photography. Only line drawings, simple and cleanly drawn, were deemed by Nobbs to be suitable for professional purposes, despite the higher aesthetic quality of wash drawings with their looser lines and emphasis on light and

[147] Percy E. Nobbs, "The Delineation of Architecture," *CAB* 6, no. 2 (February 1904): 37-42, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm

shading.[148] Though wash drawings were more pleasing to eye, with their careful shading and faithful expression of light and texture, he questioned the architect, who in the age of film would lavish, "time and skill superior to that of the very carvers who did the original [...] upon what any photographer could turn out."[149] The inherent simplicity of a good line drawing therefore made them the medium of choice for the professional architect, as they portrayed the object as it really was, not as it ought to be, or could be in the right sunlight or setting.[150] Architecture, in Nobbs' estimation, had to be, "seen to be felt [...] a good drawing of an architectural subject [...] more eloquent than all the poets and orators."[151] Predating the ideas of art-and-cultural historians Walter Benjamin and John Berger by a generation, Nobbs's early notions concerning mechanical reproduction and artistic representation situated Nobbs at the forefront of modern design philosophy.

In the same article, Nobbs compared the relative educational merits of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris to those of the Royal Institute of British Architects in London. Under the French system, a much stronger emphasis was placed on artistic ability, with a preference for the high detail and naturalistic use of shading as provided by pencil wash drawings. In England, however, students were instructed instead to focus their energies towards simplicity, their unadorned pen-and-ink line drawings aimed at capturing their subjects as they appeared in reality. [152] Both with their own strengths and weaknesses, Nobbs concluded that, "the ideal lies between the two." [153] While Nobbs was content to accept the best parts of either model, there was one trend in architectural circles of late

[148] Ibid, 40.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid, 37.
[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid, 40-42.
[153] Ibid, 38.

which he could not abide, that of the fashionable, aesthetic "affectations," which threatened to corrupt students of architecture from Paris to Glasgow.[154]

The Art Nouveau craze of the late nineteenth century had blossomed by 1900 into a popular architectural style, one which according to Nobbs, eschewed truth – in drawing, materials, and design – in exchange for instant gratification. Dripping with affectation, Art Nouveau as an architectural style was the epitome of the fanciful extravagance of the Beaux-Arts, its chameleonic ability to turn wrought iron into dangling vines and dragonflies, and stained glass into rose petals, having quickly captured the imaginations of young architects across the globe. Nobbs feared that the upcoming generation of architects, in their rush towards the modish new trend, had lost sight of the rational techniques of working in brick, stone, and steel, forgetting in the process that it was the builder who had to make do with whatever they were given. Nobbs addressed the problem in his article, suggesting that, "It is as if a sculptor modeling in wax for bronze had forgot the nature of bronze in his enthusiasm for wax."[155] If drawing was the foundation of design, and design the foundation of architecture, then it followed that any non-essential, artistic "affectations" were tantamount to introducing representational falsehoods and impurities into the development of otherwise good, honest, architecture. In this transgression, the French were not alone – the Arts and Crafts, ostensibly the model of simplicity and honest design, having its own challenges regarding authenticity.

The Arts and Crafts Movement, to which Nobbs owed most of his academic and professional inspiration, was not without its own potential for superficial frivolities in

[154] Ibid, 37.
[155] Ibid.

place of firm design principles. Nobbs cautioned his students about the dangers of too closely following fashionable trends in a republished lecture within the *CAB*:

> In naming this course The Building Trades the intention has been to avoid the use of the word Crafts, which is perhaps more applicable to the subject matter about to be delivered, because that word has during the last twenty years come to be associated with a certain amateurishness in the field of art which the ancient craftsmen would have been last to approve. Also, because during the last decade the "Arts and Crafts Movement" as it has been called, has tended more and more to countenance certain eccentricities in design which its loudest and most strident supporters have dubbed "originality." Having set up a brazen new art (or L'Art Nouveau) has resulted, and the word "craft" is never out of the mouth of those who follow that way.[156]

Here, Nobbs hit upon arguably the single-most important question concerning the Arts and Crafts – that of authenticity. From Morris, to Stickley, to Nobbs, the problem of authenticity had crossed the Atlantic, passed over borders, and traversed the entirety of the Arts and Crafts Movement from its inception.

His tenure at McGill to last until 1940, the impact and legacy left by Nobbs upon architectural education and the shape of the profession in Canada was immense. In comparison to the role of Eden Smith in Toronto, Nobbs' experience from within the academic and cultural centre of the country in Montreal provided the latter with the advantage of disseminating the ideals of the Craft Movement from the top-down. For while Eden Smith had garnered much success and notoriety on the international level, through the efforts of the Eighteen Club and its work in conjunction with the Architectural League of America, the Toronto architect's Arts and Crafts aspirations had always maintained a grassroots, borderline subversive bent. In the polite, cordial atmosphere of Toronto and the OAA, Smith and his architectural brethren had been typecast in the role of ambitious upstarts, a well-meaning collection of creative minds whose ideals, while noble, were all but predestined to fall short of realizing their full

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[156] Percy E. Nobbs, "Opening Lecture of the Department of Architecture, McGill University," *CAB*, October, 1904, 162. Found online at: http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm

potential. For Nobbs in Montreal, from his privileged position of authority at McGill, the Scottish-born Arts and Crafts architect was able to lend his professorial wisdom to the broader architectural community. His authority thus rarely, if ever, in question, Nobbs was able to bring the Arts and Crafts, along with his unique composite conceptualization of Canadian architecture, to fellow architects in a manner that would have been the envy of even the most dyed-in-the-wool member of the Eighteen Club.

Conclusion

Standing in front of the Legislative Buildings at Queen's Park, it is hard to look up at the imposing sandstone facade and not be taken by the sense of permanence expressed in its heavy design. More difficult to see without any further context, is that the structure represents, at least metaphorically, the birthplace not only of professional architecture in Canada, but of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. The main building, built by Buffalo architect, R. A. Waite under spurious circumstances, and responsible for a scandal which ultimately lead to the formation of the OAA, is thus a key part of the foundation upon which the architectural profession in Canada was created. The diminutive, albeit architecturally superior Lennox addition at the side and rear of the building serves, too, as a reminder of the struggles faced at the turn of the last century in Canada by local architects to rise in public esteem, and to emerge from the long shadow cast by a blind preference for foreign talent. Lastly, although it would be misleading to credit entirely the Legislative Buildings with the birth of either the Canadian architectural profession or Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, it can be argued that without the OAA, there would have been no Eighteen Club, no Smith to stir the pot, and no example for Nobbs, the PQAA, or any other such organization to follow.

Thus from a common spark, many fires were lit – most brightly in Ontario and Quebec – during the earliest years of the Canadian architectural profession, eventually spreading across the country. Fanning the flames, the twin currents of nationalism and protectionism took many forms, the desire to professionalize, and the favour curried upon the newly-arrived Arts and Crafts Movement, both equally driven by a perceived need among most Canadian architects to find a solution to a problem that appeared to have no correct answer. The clearing smoke gave way to new life within the profession, the promise of forging a national identity through art and architecture, as expressed by its most progressive members, more than cause for encouragement to those who only a decade previous had been ready to abandon all hope of rebuilding. Prepped by the OAA, PQAA, Smith, Nobbs, and others for reconstruction through the creation of a sound architectural foundation built upon education, training, and a new outlook on professionalization, Canada's architectural profession forged a path towards rehabilitation that in many ways owed its inspiration to the scandal at Queen's Park.

Divergent from the start, the path to success for Canadian architecture took on several configurations, the most tangible being the creation of the Ontario and Quebec Models of education, training, and professionalization. Shaped in large part by the efforts of Smith in Ontario and Nobbs in Quebec, both models were simultaneously influenced by a host of transformative ideas and innovations, the arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement in particular, seized upon by many as a solution to the problems facing the profession. For while significant progress was made in regards to the formation of various practical schools and departments of architecture, and the battle for professional status and regulation wore on, the importation and adoption of the many ideals of the Arts

and Crafts Movement by far outweighed the influence of any other single factor. Advanced in Ontario through the grassroots efforts of Smith and the Eighteen Club, and in Quebec by Nobbs from atop the highest echelons of academic and professional authority, the aims of the Arts and Crafts Movement soon became synonymous with Canadian self-realization, autonomy, and the creation of a national style and identity. Touted by its supporters for its inherently nationalistic attributes, namely its proclivity towards the promotion of local materials, craftspeople, and traditions, the Arts and Crafts Movement, along with its English pedigree, and chameleonic ability to boost the profile of any adoptive nation, was seen as an ideal path forward for twentieth-century Canada.

Chapter Three will thus explore the solution side of the equation, the various exponents and multipliers having been discussed at length. To this end, the products of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, namely those pertaining to domestic architecture, and by extension, to the creation of a national style through the design of homes, neighbourhoods, and entire streetcar suburbs, within three of Canada's largest cities, will be turned to. The homes of Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure will be compared and contrasted, their similarities and differences explored in detail, as will the various expressions of the Craft ideal that took root across Canada at the time. The rise of the suburbs, and the roots of today's middle-class conceptualization of urban life in Canada, will be discussed, the influence of the Craft Movement upon the construction of Canada's ever-complex national identity during these transformative years, to be explored in full.

Chapter Three:

The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement and the Rise of the City

Introduction

In Upton Sinclair's [1878-1968] famous muckraking novel, *The Jungle*,[1] [1906] the hero, Jurgis Rudkus, and his Lithuanian family, are exposed to the many struggles to be had within the working-class slums of early twentieth-century Chicago. Lost amidst the crumbling tenements, dark saloons, and the foreboding presence of the nearby slaughterhouses and meat packing plants, Rudkus and his unhappy brood grind on, hopeless in their misfortune. Though perhaps borrowing a little from the well of dime-novel melodrama, Sinclair's work was effective as an impetus for social change in the United States, its frank depictions of working-class poverty pushing middle-class readers to accept at least some level of responsibility for the plight of the working poor. President Theodore Roosevelt, facing mounting pressure from the public, was moved sufficiently enough to create the Food and Drug Administration, thus beginning a new era of labour laws and corporate regulations in an effort to make life better for all.

Hailed as the Progressive Era in the United States, the rise in social consciousness and civic responsibility towards the working class, immigrants, and the poor, was in many ways an extension of the idealism born out of the City Beautiful movement as it spread from Europe to North America at the end of the nineteenth century. Slum clearances, followed by the creation of public housing projects, temperance unions, schools, hospitals, and community centres – to name but a few innovations of the time, began to rise within the working-class, inner-city neighbourhoods of Canada and the United States. Coinciding with an era that included several highly destructive fires –

[1] Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (Chicago: Doubleday, Jabber & Company, 1906).

including those of Chicago [1871], Vancouver [1886], Toronto [1904], and San Francisco [1906] – the rebuilding process afforded ample opportunities to experiment with modern construction techniques and to test creative city-building solutions to long-standing problems. Out of the ruin, several major American and Canadian cities engaged in rebuilding efforts at this time with a vision towards a cleaner and brighter future. Defined between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century by L'Enfant's [1754-1825] plan for Washington, D.C. [1792], Haussmann's [1809-1891] renovation of Paris [1853-1870], and Olmstead's [1822-1903] creation of Central Park [1858], what became the City Beautiful movement soon spread to many cities within Europe and North America. By the turn of the last century, the movement had reached its zenith, Chicago's "White City," built for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, intended to represent the epitome of the idealism that had early on defined the spirit of the City Beautiful.

Between 1880 and 1920, cities of every size and configuration across the United States and Canada, began to experiment with what was then known as urban reform, the City Beautiful becoming but one of many tools at the disposal of those who eventually adopted the title of city planner.[2] Experiencing a massive population boom at this time, Canada's urban demographics shifted dramatically between the 1881 and 1921 Censuses, multiplying by a factor of four – from 1.1 to 4.3 million – and changing proportionally, from just a quarter of the total population to fully half.[3] Thus in the space of a generation, the demand for housing quickly outpaced that of urban development, pushing cities to expand their suburban frontiers. The arrival of streetcar tracks, roads, and utility poles,

[2] Paul Rutherford, "Tomorrow's Metropolis: The Urban Reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920," in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*, eds. Gilbert A. Sterter and Alan F. J. Artibise (Ottawa: Carleton University Press Inc., 1984), 435.
[3] Ibid.

signalled the development of countless new suburbs, the middle-class dream of home ownership spreading to working class families in step with the abundant availability of cheap land, cost-saving new materials, and labour-efficient building techniques.

The urban reform movement, successful as it was, at least in terms of its popularity across a range of cities in the United States, was adopted much more cautiously north of the border. Canadian cities, as argued by Paul Rutherford, were much more beholden to the national dream of rural, not urban, expansion, a belief that served to dramatically slow any real talk of urban reform or City Beautiful schemes until very late into the nineteenth century.[4] By the early twentieth century, however, attitudes had begun to shift, as a wave of urban reform municipal governments swept into power during the years prior to World War I. From Vancouver to Halifax, many Canadian cities set upon a short-lived, albeit intense period of urban reform, one which was heavily underwritten by property taxes gained as a direct result of rapid suburban growth and residential development.[5] In terms of the latter, of the rapid expansion of the "streetcar" or "garden" suburb, and subsequent rise to prominence of the single family home,[6] the promotion of a new, modern, middle-class life became intertwined to a particular vision of urban reform, one hinging almost entirely upon reliable services, rapid transit, and affordable land.

To this end, Canadians' brief experiment with urban reform, which included plans for Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver, and many other cities, most often came to naught, brought down by the realities of a municipal-provincial power imbalance that often stymied the more ambitious aims of these projects.[7] For while municipal-level

[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid, 439-42.
[6] Ibid, 442.
[7] Ibid, 446.

urban reformers may have been eager to remake their respective urban laboratories in their own image, the vast majority of plans, as according to Walter Van Nus – whether for rapid transit, airports, city parks, or grand boulevards – were rarely able to take precedence over the perceived and often very pressing need for working- and middle-class housing.[8] Thus in most Canadian cities, the thrust of the City Beautiful movement often retreated away from plans to boldly remake city centres, reformers instead focusing their efforts toward making the new suburbs as attractive as possible in order to supply the municipal tax base with a stable demographic of working- and middle-class homeowners. Taking a less glamourous approach to urban reform, one which favoured suburban growth over grandiose civic redevelopment schemes, reformers resigned themselves to believing that they were helping alleviate the problem of affordable housing, the odd city park or tree-lined boulevard a happy bonus wherever they arose.

The rise in public concern over the future of urban development soon spread beyond city planners, civil engineers, and architects, early on capturing the attention of sociologists, psychologists, and other academics, the published remarks of these early experts soon making their way to the inner circles of Canada's cultural elite. Especially pervasive among English Canadian intellectuals, including academics, elite social clubs, and professional associations, the emergence of a strong "nationalist ethos" helped form a common framework from which new, often challenging ideas about city-building were advanced.[9] Marlene Shore's examination of the groundbreaking work of Chicago School sociologist Carl Dawson of McGill University during the 1920s, highlights the extent to

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[8] Walter Van Nus, "The Fate of City Beautiful Thought in Canada, 1893-1930," in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*, eds. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise (Ottawa: Carleton University Press Inc., 1984), 176-80.

[9] Marlene Shore, *The Science of Social Redemption: McGill, the Chicago School, and the Origins of Social Research in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 121.

which the notion of the "City as an Organism," or living laboratory, was shared among certain academic circles in both the United States and Canada.[10] Conducted during the tail end of the City Beautiful movement, Dawson's concentric circles theory of urban expansion, in which the historic city centre is gradually built out and encircled by a succession of varying demographics, sought to create a model that could explain not only Montreal's development, but that of all cities great and small.[11] Driven largely by access to rapid transit, in this period characterized by the extensive networks of urban and suburban electric streetcar and radial rail lines that served most North American and European cities, the rise of the garden, or streetcar suburb, became understood by Dawson and others to be the foundation of modern city-building.[12]

By the beginning of the twentieth century in Canada, the country's largest urban centres had already become crowded. In cities such as Montreal and Toronto, where heavy industry had long been in production at the heart of their respective urban settings, the people who lived and worked alongside the many factories, rail yards, and meat packing plants, faced a difficult life of long hours, poor housing conditions, and little in the way of social assistance. The working-class slums and immigrant ghettos that cropped up in North American cities – Toronto's Ward neighbourhood, located just south of Old City Hall, or in Montreal's Goose Village, both demolished in the postwar era – shared the city centre with the High Street crowds of King, Yonge, Ste-Catherine, and St. Laurent. Slums abutted the homes of all but the most well-to-do neighbourhoods, the fashionable shops of the country's well-heeled downtown promenades often backing onto the warren of alleyways that could be found across much of the inner city. Between the

[10] Ibid, 125.
[11] Ibid, 135-6.
[12] Ibid, 135.

mansions of the country's various millionaires' rows, and the working class tenements of Canada's urban centres, there was little comfort to be had among what began to be known as the middle class. For the upwardly mobile, a home in the country was far too impractical for reasons of distance and cost, while a home in the city centre, though obtainable, put an otherwise respectable family at odds with the noise, crowding, and perceived impropriety of the city. It was therefore the advent of the "streetcar suburb," the newly developed neighbourhoods that began to take shape within walking – or trolley-ride – distance from the businesses, shops, and amusements of downtown which offered the emerging middle class a domestic refuge. Flocking to Canada's inner suburbs, middle- and working-class families soon became the fastest growing demographic of homeowners during the early twentieth century. Located at the apex of urban reform and City Beautiful experimentation, Canada's swelling ranks of modern suburbanites were met with yet one more key cultural touchstone. Whether attracted by the allure of the picket fence, stone hearth, modern – and more often than not, Tudor, Craftsman, English Cottage, or otherwise Arts and Crafts style – home, a move to the suburbs was often synonymous with entry into the epicentre of Canada's largest, most tangible expression of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Among the well-treed streets and comfortable homes that arose at the periphery of Canada's growing cities, a new ideal of domesticity developed alongside the adoption of the aesthetic design philosophy of the Arts and Crafts. No less transformative than urban reform or City Beautiful doctrine, the Arts and Crafts Movement did as much to shape Canada's first inner suburbs as any other factor.

This chapter focuses upon the physical impact made by the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, as an extension of urban reform and City Beautiful thought, with an

emphasis on the design, construction, and suburban settings in which the Craft ideal became woven into Canada's urban fabric. Concentrated along the urban periphery, the work of Eden Smith in Toronto, Percy Nobbs in Montreal, and Samuel Maclure in Victoria, are discussed for their significance and scope. Moving beyond the debates that shaped the architectural profession, this chapter explores the architectural contributions made by Canada's Arts and Crafts masters. Joining Smith and Nobbs, British Columbia architect Samuel Maclure, though less politically-minded than his Central Canadian counterparts, is here added to the conversation, for both his active role in the Craft Movement, and for his impressive collection of Arts and Crafts homes. Thus, their considerable, collective body of work will be explored through a mix of archival and modern photographs, the solution to the housing crisis as experienced during the early twentieth century, brought to life as each locale in turn is brought forward for discussion.

Urban Canada and Rise of the City Beautiful Movement[13]

Toronto's downtown at the turn of the last century – spanning from Lake Ontario north to College Street, and from Spadina Avenue east to the Don River – was a messy hodgepodge of nineteenth-century warehouses, factories, and slums, erected along muddy, narrow streets of one- and two-storey buildings of varying architectural quality. The central waterfront, cut off from pedestrian access for the better part of a century by rail lines, grain elevators, factories, and industrial port lands, had early on been regarded as a lost cause.[14] Long a site of heavy industry, the city's waterways, as illustrated by

[13] For additional reference on the topic of Toronto and the City Beautiful Movement, see: Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997). Additionally, for a collection of essays with a national scope, refer to Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F. J. Atribise, eds. *Shaping the Urban Landscape: Aspects of the Canadian City-Building Process* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 2008).

[14] Christopher Armstrong, *Making Toronto Modern: Architecture and Design, 1895-1975* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 17-18.

Jennifer Bonnell, only began to gain traction in terms of civic improvement initiatives beginning in the 1880s, and even then primarily with an eye towards further industrial expansion.[15] Deprived of green space – Toronto's crowded, muddy streets made, chaotic with their mixed traffic of pedestrians, electric streetcars, horse-drawn carriages, and the recent addition of the automobile – the people who lived and worked in the city centre had few options for quiet reflection or domestic repose. With no Central Park or Mount Royal to offer downtown city dwellers even a little respite from the daily grind, Toronto – or Hogtown, as it was known colloquially – was a city defined by its desire for change.

Christopher Armstrong, in *Making Toronto Modern: Architecture and Design, 1895-1975* [2014], highlights the extent to which Toronto's civic leaders, urban planners, and architects, had since the end of the nineteenth century, struggled with the notion of how to best bring their city into the modern age. Armstrong characterizes the struggle as one between the contemporary forces of what he distinguishes as "The Modern Movement" and the "moderne."[16] "The Modern Movement," according to the author, was that which architects and urban planners of the day would have understood to mean the addition of new innovations in construction, building materials, and creature comforts, such as central air, electricity, and indoor plumbing, into familiar architectural forms. The early twentieth-century notion of the "moderne," a term borrowed from the European architectural schools of the Beaux-Arts and Bauhaus, spawned the experimental and highly fashionable traditions of Art Nouveau, Bauhaus, Art Deco, and the International Style. Culminating most broadly in the birth of Art Deco, these interrelated styles

[15] Jennifer Bonnell, *Reclaiming the Don: An Environmental History of Toronto's Don River Valley* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 71.
[16] Armstrong, *Making Toronto Modern*, 18.

increasingly came into conflict with what Armstrong contends to be the relatively conservative public tastes that predominated in turn-of-the-last-century Toronto.[17]

Armstrong cites the devastation caused by both of the fires of 1895 and 1904, as having played a significant role in the early efforts to modernize Toronto. The Great Fire of 1904, in particular, which left over one hundred downtown businesses in ruins, necessitated a full review and update of planning and building codes for the city, and inaugurated an entire new way of thinking about the urban development of Toronto.[18] The widespread notion of the "City Beautiful" began to spread throughout Toronto at this time, its many progressive, civic-minded boosters on record for sharing in their strong support for recreating Toronto in the image of Chicago, Paris, or Washington, D.C. Despite their best efforts, the face of Toronto's downtown changed slowly, as a mixture of conservative public tastes, a short supply of municipal funds, and a general lack of vision, worked to slow the progress of the city's transition into a modern metropolis.[19] On the domestic front, however, while the fire did not affect Toronto's Victorian homes and grand, suburban estates, the numerous annexations of the early twentieth century incorporated vast acreages of recent farmland into the urban fold. The development of Toronto's newly acquired neighbourhoods – or streetcar suburbs – allowed for experimentations with new tastes and modern designs, the city as a whole undergoing, albeit cautiously, its first, aesthetic progression in a generation.[20]

While *Making Toronto Modern* focuses almost exclusively on the large scale, commercial, industrial, and major city planning developments and innovations that

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[17] Ibid, 58.
[18] Ibid, 25.
[19] Ibid, 29.
[20] Ibid, 32.

brought Toronto into the twentieth century, there is a fleeting discussion of the domestic, residential side of the story. Eden Smith gains a brief mention, his contribution to the city expressed as one which at long last helped to nudge stuffy, upper-middle-class tastes beyond fussy Victorianism, and into the simple, modern comforts of a home designed for the twentieth century.[21] Though no explicit mention of the Arts and Crafts Movement is made, the author does agree with the contention of William Kilbourn and William Dendy, joint authors of *Toronto Observed* [1986],[22] the latter also the author of the *Lost Toronto* [1978],[23] that the English Cottage style espoused by Smith quickly began to dominate the Toronto housing market between 1890 and 1930.[24] On the matter of the scope of Smith's physical contribution to the domestic landscape, however, Armstrong relies upon the faulty estimation, taken from an obituary of the architect, that Eden Smith constructed no less than twenty-five hundred buildings during his career.[25] That figure has been long contested and debunked by Geoffrey Simmins and Kelly Crossman, as well as Smith biographer Douglas W. Brown, all of whom cite city records suggesting a figure roughly one tenth that quoted in the 1949 by obituary by Smith's one-time apprentice A.S. Mathers [1895-1965], to an estimated 270 commissions.[26] Nevertheless, Armstrong is sure to include Smith's domestic work, alongside the numerous skyscrapers of the early twentieth century, that together contributed towards making Toronto modern.

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[21] Ibid, 44.
[22] William Dendy and William P. Kilbourn, *Toronto Observed: Its Architecture, Patrons, and History*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986).
[23] William Dendy, *Lost Toronto* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978).
[24] Armstrong, *Making Toronto Modern*, 44.
[25] A. S. Mathers, "Obituary: Eden Smith," *JRAIC* 27, no. 3 (March 1950): 112.
[26] Simmins and Crossman. Both authors point to the possibility of an error on behalf of the original copy editor, the more accurate estimate of 250-70 homes conveniently one tenth the amount as given in the 1949 obituary, thus denoting the possibility of either a simple substitution error, or a grand over-estimation.

Eden Smith's domestic architecture, most of it composed in his understated style, designed from the inside out, and stylistically reminiscent of the English Cottage albeit with an urban/suburban, modern sensibility, represented more than a blend of architectural forms. In their simple, comfortable modernity, Smith's homes brought the English Cottage, replete with picturesque garden, and advantageous sightlines from nearly every perspective, into the twentieth century. In Armstrong's parlance, Smith's homes provide a good example of the Modern Movement, a traditional aesthetic drawn neatly overtop an assortment of modern-day construction and technological innovations – a quaint English cottage made modern with electricity, central heating, and a telephone in the drawing room. From such a perspective, Smith's work, and by extension, that ostensibly of Percy Nobbs, Samuel Maclure, and many other Arts and Crafts architects practicing at the time, can be summarily dismissed as not belonging to the more progressive realm of the "moderne." It is the contention of this study, however, that such a perspective does not offer a complete, accurate assessment of the work in question. Furthermore, it can be argued that the distinction Armstrong makes between the Modern Movement and the moderne overlooks the ways in which architectural developments are intertwined. Falling somewhere between the two, the Arts and Crafts was neither part of the Modern Movement nor the moderne, its traditionalist aesthetic and materiality, applied under a specific set of guidelines and philosophies, as much part of the latter as any other more overt examples of experimental design to spring up at the time.

Escape from Hogtown: The Arts and Crafts Neighbourhoods of Toronto

By the time *Maclean*'s caught up to Smith in 1911, the Arts and Crafts-inspired architect had already made his mark upon Toronto. Smith's many creations, both

downtown and within the rapidly rising suburbs, had in only a few short years, gone a great way towards the expression and delivery of a physical representation of genteel, modern, middle-class domesticity. Blending English architectural traditions with Canadian materials and craftsmanship, Smith was able to straddle two worlds, creating for his predominantly middle-class, English-Canadian clientele, a house and home that served to say as much about the owner as it did the architect. Steadfast in his belief that architecture was synonymous with art, and architects with artists, the true craftsman in Smith's view was one who was able to breathe poetic expression into their work, and above all, find joy and satisfaction in so doing.[27] Smith cautioned, however, that since the start of the nineteenth century, this artistic interplay between an architect and their work had been greatly diminished by the advent of machine-made architecture, and mass production.[28] In Smith's estimation, English domestic architecture, which he saw as the best model, became "uninteresting" in his grandfather's day, a trend that in recent years had been picked up and given new life in Canada.[29] Mimicry was at the forefront of the problem according to Smith, the wholesale imitation of other countries' architectural styles into an inappropriate setting, creating what the author referred to as artistic "swagger."[30] Interested only in the creation of architecture that sings, as Smith so eloquently wrote, the architect had to create his melody with only the simplest, most honest expression of natural beauty through his materials and thus craft his composition.

It is in his expressive touting of the virtues of material honesty, that the connection between Smith and his Arts and Crafts forbears, such as William Morris,

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[27] Eden Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," *Maclean's Magazine*, March, 1911, 97.
[28] Ibid, 98.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

whom had been a regular presence at Smith's architectural college in England, is most evident. Thus in support of honesty and simplicity in design, Smith offered the following:

> We should treat our material more honorably, and not, by trying to make it look like some other material, show that we are ashamed of it, we should show that any expression of our intention. If our house is to be built of wooden posts, boards and shingles, because we find these materials most convenient to our use, the thing we might want to swagger about should be the skill shown in making this stuff not merely retain its identity, but contribute to form an evidently essential part of the composition, those peculiar or inherent qualities which make its identity.[31]

Taking a page as well from A. W. N. Pugin and the Ecclesiologists, including fellow Gothic Revivalists Frank Wills[32] [1822-1857] and William Hay[33] [1818-1888] who were active in British North America, any attempt to plaster over architectural details, as had been the accepted practice for generations by Smith's time, was nothing less than an affront to the sensibilities of the Craft Movement. "The highest virtue in any art," according to Smith, "is the development of individuality in simplicity."[34] With this, Smith argued that the best way forward for domestic architecture in Canada was to build honestly, to steer all efforts towards the aim of an explicit, yet artful blend of expressive functionality. Pocket doors, sash windows, and gas fireplaces, made possible with their clever use of Victorian-era innovations, such as hidden pulleys, cables, and gas lines, were in Smith's estimation to be replaced with well-crafted hinged doors, fully-functional casement windows, and the warm glow of coal. The Cult of the Real, though present within the realm of Canadian architecture a generation prior, had once again, through the efforts of Smith and his ilk, been born anew in Toronto. Smith ended his first *Maclean's* piece with his contention that the notion of "style" in architectural terms, ought to be

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[31] Ibid.
[32] Frank Wills, *Ancient English ecclesiastical architecture and its principles, applied to the wants of the church at the present day* (New York: Stanford and Swords, 1850).
[33] William Hay designed St. Michael's College [1856], and St. Basil's Church [1860] in Toronto, both in the Gothic Revival style then reaching the height of its popularity.
[34] Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," 100.

dropped altogether, as to constrict one's understanding of the medium to simplistic divisions between this or that style, was to miss the aesthetic identity of the work itself.[35] The architect's artistic character was to be expressed through their thoughtful designs and complementary use of natural materials, with always an attentive eye turned towards any and all considerations of honesty, function, and simplicity.

Figure 3.1 45 Wychwood Park [1910] in Toronto. Designed by Smith in the English Cottage style then popular, and completed with a fine use of irregular massing, this home also features one of Smith's signature hidden entranceways. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003.

True to his Arts and Crafts principles, Eden Smith was primarily concerned with the positioning, planning, and layout of his houses.[36] Highly unusual for the time, Smith favoured floor plans which allowed the principal living quarters to face the back garden, and thus away from the street. This resulted in the development of one of Smith's

[35] Ibid, 101.
[36] Ibid, 18.

trademark innovations, captured in several trade journals including *Construction* in 1909, the so-called "turnaround house" or "turned-about house," which he proudly built in several Toronto neighbourhoods.[37] These unusual homes were seen as so strange at the time that tour buses often diverted from their routes just to catch a glimpse.[38] Making prime use of sunlight, space, position, and local materials, Smith was able to craft sensible, well-designed homes which held true to the Craft Movement's foundational principle of allowing nature to do the work of the craftsman wherever possible.

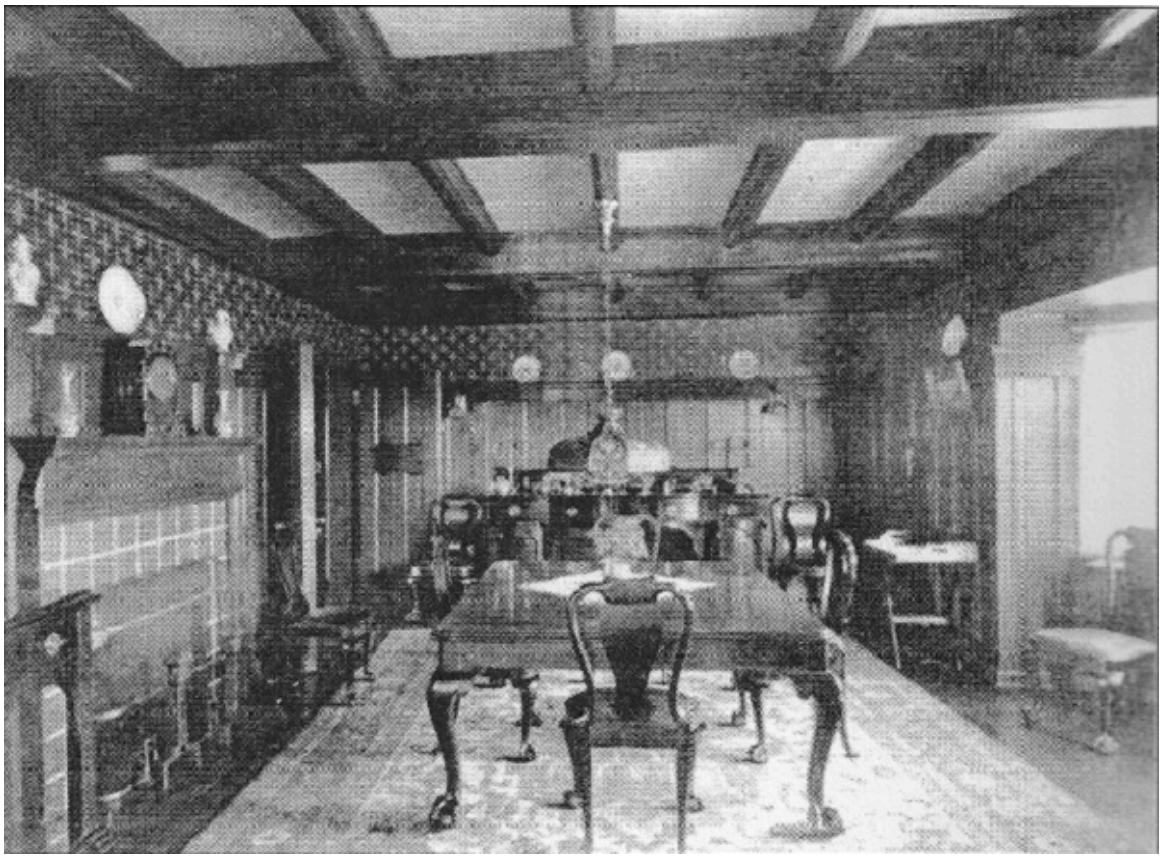

Figure 3.2 5 Thornwood Road [1909] in Toronto. The interior of this Smith-designed home is highly representative of the Arts and Crafts style, from the heavy woodwork to the patterned wallpaper. *Maclean's*. Vol. 22 (July 1911).

[37] "The Kitchen-to-the-front House," *Construction* 2, no. 5 (March 1909): 43-46.
[38] W. Douglas Brown, *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect* (Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003), 18.

Smith also followed the Arts and Crafts notion that a house should be designed from the inside out, writing in his first *Maclean's* article that, "A House should not be an entity subdivided, as well as may be, into a required number of parts, each more or less convenient. It should be a number of complete and convenient parts combined to make an entity."[39] Thus drawn along lines first laid out by Pugin and fellow English Gothic Revivalist William Butterfield, much of Smith's philosophy of design had roots in the Gothic, rather than the Classical tradition, a sign of the architect's deeply rooted Arts and Crafts credentials. Designing from the inside out often left Smith with an irregular space, one which he would then shape into another of his unique inclusions – a central hallway linking the front entrance to the ground floor rooms and main staircase. Lastly, many Smith homes are also easily recognized by their peculiar hidden entranceways, he often placing the main entrance to the side, thereby providing a special sense of privacy.[40]

Figure 3.3 Grace Church on the Hill [1912-13] in Toronto. Smith's ecclesiastical work in Toronto brought Arts and Crafts principles of design into the fold of the Gothic Revival style then popular here and across Canada. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003.

[39] Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," 100.
[40] Brown, *Eden Smith*, 19.

Eden Smith most often used local building materials, his career in Toronto thereby defined by a heavy reliance upon brick. When money was no object, Smith would rely more heavily upon stone, the best-known example being Grace Church on the Hill constructed in 1912-13. Smith was not afraid to try new materials as well, such as clinker brick in one home, and even reinforced concrete as seen in the construction of his son Harry's home in Wychwood Park. The latter, built in 1913, followed in the footsteps of fellow English Arts and Crafts architects working with the same experimental materials, including W. R. Lethaby, and E. S. Prior [1852-1932]. In Wychwood Park, Smith's architectural footprint is the largest, the leafy Midtown Toronto neighbourhood today a beautiful testament to the architect's dedication to excellence. Having designed roughly 270 homes in Toronto, the architectural legacy left by Smith cannot be ignored.

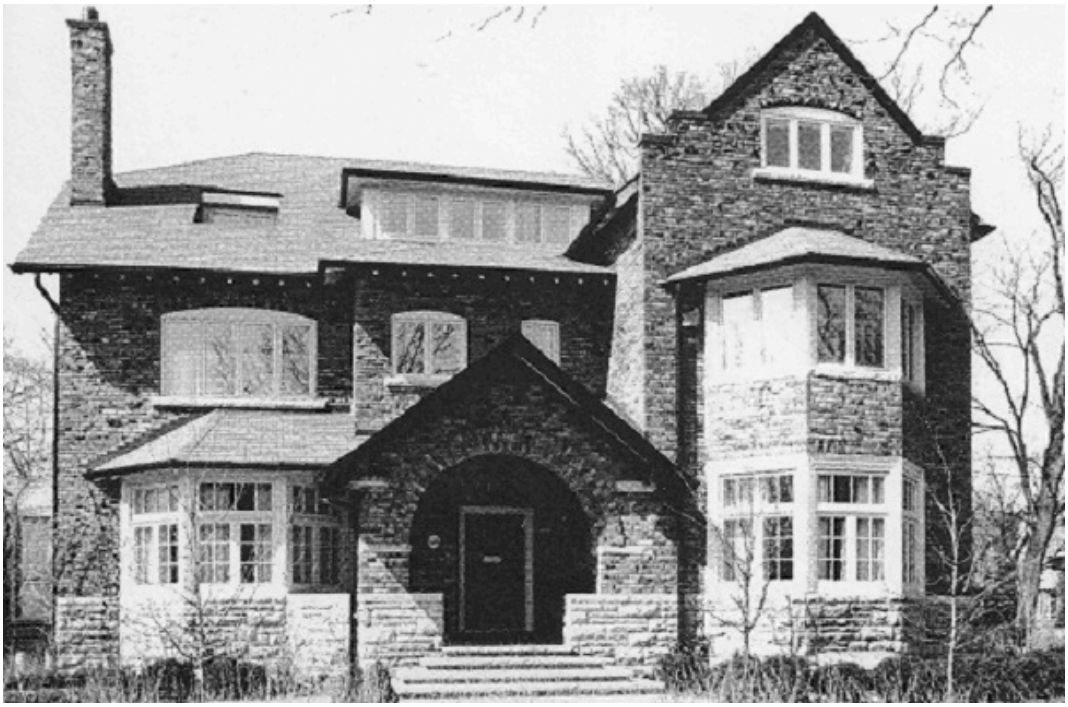

Figure 3.4 48 Cluny Drive [1902] in Toronto. This Rosedale residence represents Smith's first use of clinker brick, one of just four or five instances of the architect's reliance upon the material found across the city, and today one of the few examples of its use by any architect at any time in Toronto. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003.

Eden Smith's career spanned many years, from the 1890s, to the 1920s. His many commissions brought the architect to nearly every corner of Toronto, from High Park to the Beaches, Wychwood Park to the Annex, and Forest Hill to Rosedale. Among his work done in a more traditionally urban setting, the most intriguing of his commissions came in the form of the Spruce Court and Riverdale-Bain Court public housing developments that Smith designed for the Toronto Housing Company [THC] between 1913 and 1915. The THC expressed its firm belief in the intrinsic value of providing quality housing for all hardworking Canadians – homeownership in and of itself among the first steps towards raising up the whole of society.[41] Referred to as, "cottage flats," the Spruce Court development, which had just been completed upon publication of the report, was described as having modern amenities, such as hot water, central heating, and individual laundry facilities with which to reduce the labouring hours of working-class housewives.[42] Regarding this last detail, it was made clear that the, "lady members of our Board gave valuable assistance in planning these houses."[43] In addition to these modern conveniences, many of the cottage flats were adorned with generous verandahs and porches, and the entire community was encouraged to benefit from the common green space set in the middle of the grounds. Nestled amongst an already well-established, older neighbourhood, the Spruce Court development was well-treed and designed with an eye towards the picturesque and a strong connection to nature. While simple in design even by Smith's standards, both the Spruce and Riverdale-Bain Court developments featured their share of Arts and Crafts design elements, such as Smith's signature hidden

[41] "Better Housing in Canada: 'The Ontario Plan,'" *The First Annual Report of the Toronto Housing Company, Limited* (Toronto: The Toronto Housing Company, Limited, 1913), 3.
[42] Ibid, 9.
[43] Ibid.

entranceways, irregular massing, Tudor half-timbering, and a pleasing amount of garden and green space for all. Inside, the homes were simple yet efficient, featuring ample modern comforts, along with generous windows, natural wood trim, and hardwood floors. These were to be comfortable homes – honestly built for honest, hardworking Canadians.

Figure 3.5 16 Spruce Court [c. 1920] in Toronto. Completed in the English Cottage style, Smith's foray into public housing was deemed a success from the start. The smartly-appointed homes were designed with a sense of purpose and dignity that had yet to be seen locally in regards to the construction of a working-class public housing estate. City of Toronto Archives, Series 838, Item 285.

The THC report featured the Spruce and Riverdale-Bain Court developments almost exclusively, these being the two most complete, and up to that point, largest public housing initiatives that they in conjunction with their shareholders and the City of Toronto had seen through to completion. It is of note that the principal architect, Eden Smith, is never mentioned in the material, though a cursory read through the listed names of the THC's shareholders reveals that their patrons included many of Toronto's premiere families, the Eaton's, Massey's, and Harris's among some one hundred and fifty others.[44] Lawren Harris, a member of the Group of Seven, and one of Smith's many friends in the

[44] Ibid, 23-4.

Toronto arts community, is listed as a shareholder, this being of interest because Smith built Harris a home in 1911, and eventually provided the Group of Seven with their still extant Studio Building, hidden away in the Rosedale Ravine. The THC housing developments were thus planned with the famed architect of Wychwood Park and long-time friend and ally of local artists, Eden Smith, very much in mind. In many ways, the same aesthetic principles and design elements that would have been familiar to Toronto's progressively-minded, artistically-inclined, upper crust circles, were put to use for the housing of the city's poor. Once complete, the two complexes proved highly popular among the city's diverse working-class population. Waiting lists formed, and the THC was quick to rent out every room, the tenants a mix of tradesmen, factory workers, female textile workers and stenographers, as well as several Eaton's Department Store clerks, as listed in the Toronto City Directory of 1917 just a few years after the grand opening.[45]

In the years between the First and Second World Wars, Toronto's skyline continued to reach new heights, as the city was quickly becoming an urban metropolis that would eventually surpass its rival Montreal. With the addition of ever-higher, Art Deco-inspired skyscrapers, and the talk of a subway in the city's near future, Toronto's residential neighbourhoods were beginning to burst at the seams. Already in the years between 1900 and 1914, the city had annexed multiple former townships at the city's edge, a move that had largely facilitated the construction of new homes and neighbourhoods in which Smith and other like-minded local architects had begun to make a name for themselves. The elaborate streetcar network, which had been electrified as early as 1891 through much of the city, and had by 1921 become a city-owned entity – today's Toronto Transit Commission [TTC] – had long made it possible to traverse the

[45] "Spruce Court: 100 Years," *Cabbagetown Preservation Association - Newsletter*, Spring, 2013, 3.

city from the financial core out to the city limits and beyond.[46] With the coming of the subway – promised as early as 1910 – and promoted tirelessly during municipal elections, developers had long become used to the notion of building on speculation. Toronto's streetcar suburbs, built at the city's edge, connected by transit, and designed with an eye towards the perfect blend of modern living and a return to the good life, were in large part the impetus for many of Canada's Arts and Crafts-inspired homes and neighbourhoods.

Found predominantly in High Park, Wychwood Park, and Rosedale, in which the bulk of Smith's Arts and Crafts homes were built, these clusters, along with many other solo works spread across the city, became epicentres of creative thought expressed through architecture. Known primarily as a builder of fine, yet distinctly understated homes among his well-heeled circle of friends and colleagues in Toronto's arts community, Smith was able to ply his craft for a clientele more or less predetermined to embrace the expressive qualities of his work. An inventor and promoter of culture as much as he was a creator and keeper of architectural and craft traditions, Smith's contribution to the development of the city – unlike his work – can by no measure be described as understated. Determined early on in his career that Canada would one day establish a method of architectural education, training, and professional expression, the careful, studied, execution of Smith's designs served to support a national, if Anglo-centric, vision. Grounded in tradition, yet open to innovation, Smith's creative impulses were founded upon a lifetime spent in service of the antimodernist idealism born out of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Best understood as an ode to his principles, Smith's homes, churches, libraries, and public buildings, provide a blueprint for modern Toronto.

[46] "Looking Back." Toronto Transit Commission, accessed April 8, 2014, http:/www.ttc.ca/About_the_TTC/History/Looking Back.jsp

Montreal: The Arrival of the English Arts and Crafts into French Canada

While Eden Smith looked first to Britain and then Canada for inspiration, seeking to adapt the former to the latter in an effort to begin forging a new national identity and building tradition through architecture, Nobbs was additionally interested in what he deemed to be "indigenous" solutions to the problems faced by modern-day Canadians. By these, Nobbs was referring to the various architectural innovations of New France, whose purported resourcefulness in the face of the harsh, northern climate had left a legacy of architectural inventiveness among the cottages, farmhouses, and church spires of rural Quebec. In his many domestic works, Nobbs' scientific fascination with the evolution and development of French-Canadian architectural innovations and stylistic expressions worked its way into every home he touched. Though designed with an unmistakeable Scotch-English Arts and Crafts traditionalism and material aesthetic, the subtle ubiquity of Nobbs' signature bas-reliefs, wooden shutters, and French doors, added a notably French-Canadian undertone to nearly every one of his domestic works. A designer as well for many high-profile public, institutional, and commercial buildings, Nobbs' many contributions, especially to his academic and professional base at McGill, were designed with an eye toward bringing a touch of taste, dignity, and design to his adoptive city.

Far removed from the rural remnants of New France, situated within the heart of Canada's then largest metropolis, Professor Nobbs became increasingly interested in the burgeoning field of urban planning and reform, writing a number of pieces on the subject over the course of his career. Desirous of avoiding what he described as the "common vices of the vernacular architecture of the United States," namely, "artificiality, or want of realism, in the matter of spiritual content, and a gross insincerity with respect to

materials,"[47] Nobbs believed the best path forward lay with invention. This being said, Nobbs, like Smith, Maclure, and many of his contemporaries, did not believe that the blueprints of the past needed to be discarded entirely in order to advance new ideas. Nobbs adhered to his belief in the power of invention as an expression of nationality, geography, climate, and culture, his reverence for Quebec's so-called indigenous architectural forms, appearing time and time again in his writings and lectures:

> The long French cottages of rural Quebec may lay claim to represent something more than a transplantation from Picardy or the Loire. These, and the older churches of rural Quebec are real Canadian architecture. They meet the requirements of their times; they are materially and technically straightforward and honest; they embody an evolutionary process of modification or modernization of a sound parent tradition; they are racy of the soil; they have an air, a mood, a sentiment all their own. If the architectural genius of the race that produced these things has been dormant for a time, there is no reason to suppose that it is dead. Recent indications suggest that it is awakening, refreshed.[48]

Representative of Nobbs' nationalistic, Scottish Arts and Crafts design sensibility, along with his academically-tempered affinity for a certain degree of antimodernist craft idealism, the above sentiment formed the basis of his academic and professional career.

Moreover, in Nobbs' apparent belief, and enthusiasm for, the possibilities of divining among the historic remnants of New France something amounting to "real Canadian architecture,"[49] the professor-architect had wandered into the same ideological space as the well-intentioned, yet ultimately misguided folklorists and cultural curators as explored by Ian McKay. By attaching such a highly romanticized set of supposed character traits to the historic settler populations of Old Quebec, and in so thoroughly mythologizing a culture whose roots reached back across the centuries, Nobbs was guilty of the same problematic ideation of "The Folk" that would attract Helen Creighton during

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[47] Percy E. Nobbs. "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada - Part III: Adverse Influences," *JRAIC* 7, no. 11 (November 1930): 388.
[48] Percy E. Nobbs. "Present Tendencies Affecting Architecture in Canada - Part II: Modernity," *JRAIC* 7, no. 9 (September 1930): 315.
[49] Ibid.

Nobbs' lifetime. More than this, in a more practical, immediate sense, as evidenced by the consistency of Nobbs' more critical views of Canadian architecture and the potential ill fate of the profession should certain developments fail to materialize, the high bar Nobbs set in high esteem for what he viewed as an idealized, imagined past, placed him at risk for perpetual disappointment. Thus having set such a high standard for what could be counted as truly inspired, good design, Nobbs was a critic of those in his field, of whom he deemed to be the vast majority, who were for a multitude of reasons failing in their duty as architects to express inventiveness and creativity through their work. Indeed, from his arrival in Montreal in 1903, to his retirement, and beyond, a recurrent theme in Nobbs' writings, was his critical, and sometimes contemptuous outlook on the present state of architecture, whether in Canada, the United States, Britain, Europe, or elsewhere.

Highly disdainful of what he identified as an array of adverse influences newly arrived within architecture, including the disappearance of skilled craftspeople, poor urban planning, and rampant commercialism, Nobbs advocated restoring a sense of order and traditionalism to the profession underscored by a keen passion for invention. Writing on the topic in 1930, Nobbs decried the recent, Industrialism-led deskilling of craftsmen:

> Leaving carving and sculpture out of account, and speaking of stone-hewing, it is not to our credit as a civilized people that, in the period 1825-50, stone-cutting in Montreal was often executed with a precision and refinement which would have satisfied Ictinus, Peruzzi, Gabriel, or Adam. Work of that class cannot be got for love or money, by hand or machine, in Canada today. Thus, craftsmanship, which is at least the life, if not the soul of architecture, is left to perish. What is true of stone cutting, is true, in some degree, of every trade.[50]

Invoking the purity of pre-industrial craftsmanship, linked to an implicit, proto-nationalistic pride that was argued to have once existed in early Canada, Nobbs' characterization of Montreal's once adept stonecutters serves to underline the professor's affinity for the craft idealism upon which the Arts and Crafts Movement was founded.

[50] Nobbs, "Adverse Influences," 389.

Moving onto the issue of urban planning, a subject with which he had a large degree of direct experience, Nobbs was explicit in his belief that good architecture rarely, if ever, existed in a vacuum. He argued that as, "[T]he dress of a lady has been compared to the frame of a picture [...] [W]hat the frame is to the picture, [...] the site is to the building."[51] Thus for Nobbs, the necessity of careful, conscientious town planning was paramount, the finest edifice, placed upon the finest corner, upon the finest street, of next to little value if allowed to share the space with an assortment of inferior forms. Lacking the stately uniformity of the grand capitals of Britain, Europe, and the United States, Montreal, and by extension Toronto, Vancouver, and nearly every other city across Canada, with their low-slung hodgepodge of vernacular styles, was a disappointment to Nobbs, its failure tied in large part to those in charge of urban planning.[52] Only "occasionally," according to Nobbs, "but not often, we get a whole block [...] The closed vista – the best of sites – is all but denied to the Canadian architect. So our sites are for the most part quite unworthy of our architectural expenditure and effort."[53] Thus let down in equal measure by an increasing scarcity of talent, and a dearth of worthy plots and closed vistas upon which to build, Canadian architects were lacking both the canvas and the frame, the art and craft of their trade left to lay fallow in the wake of industrialization and unchecked commercial greed. In terms of the rampant commercialism that had become a fixture of twentieth-century life, Nobbs was equally critical, arguing that unlike the tangle of utility poles, telephone cables, and catenary wires that were a part of modern living, the recent increase in advertising had become a blight on the urban environment.[54]

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[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid, 390.

"More offensive and destructive of the amenity of our streets year by year," advertising, whether by means of posters, billboards, or increasingly, neon, was according to Nobbs a force just as destructive and counterproductive to the creation of a sound architectural expression within Canada as any other of the so-called adverse influences on his list.[55]

Nobbs concluded his remarks by identifying what he believed to be the main archetypes at play within the architectural profession, including the "engineering realist," the "architectural realist," the "architectural traditionalist," and the "style-monger."[56] While engineering realists were said to be satisfied simply by the structural efficacy of their creations, the more artistically inclined architectural realists were argued to be primarily concerned with the marriage of form to function. This left the architectural traditionalists to pick up where the latter left off, striving to enliven built forms with a sense of humanity, culture, history, and geographic context.[57] Lastly, the style-mongers, owing to what Nobbs deemed to be their mindless preoccupation with pattern books and architectural dishonesty, were discounted by the professor as being "of no account to artists."[58] Of the four, Nobbs viewed architectural traditionalists as the most desirable for the future of the Canadian architectural profession, their apparent reverence for good, sound design, and presumed allegiance to this or that school of architectural thought, signifying that there may yet be hope. Designing in complete sentences, and striving towards something tangible and worth fostering, Nobbs' praised the architectural traditionalist who "wants his building to say things (to the initiate at least) and do more

[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid, 392.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

than hum tunes."[59] Echoing Smith's call for "architecture that sings," Nobbs' words of praise for the architectural traditionalists, among whom he would have counted himself, served to place Nobbs firmly underneath the banner of Arts and Crafts ideology. This being said, Nobbs' concluding sentiment, calling for Canadian architects to "solve our own problems in our own way, with a weather eye on our climate," was tempered by his pragmatic declaration that "Canadian architecture will be poor, heartless stuff if we fail frankly to accept the mechanization of mass production, on the one hand, or to retain a place for the skilled artificer on the other. We have need of both."[60] Less doctrinaire than Smith, Nobbs was no less the ardent believer in the power of sound architectural principles, traditional craftsmanship, and material honesty, these being the core beliefs that he shared with Smith, Maclure, and virtually all other adherents to the Movement.

Nobbs' career spanned over forty years, from the turn of the last century to the early 1950s. During this time, Nobbs' affiliation with McGill proved very lucrative, resulting in a body of work which included the McGill University Student Union Building [1905-6], the McGill University Redpath Library Extension [1921-22], the McGill University Pathological Institute [1922-24], and others. Beyond awarding Nobbs with additional income and prestige, these projects served a very practical purpose. Nobbs used them as instructive tools for his students, giving them the hands-on experience that pure academic instruction in the principles of architecture could not provide. Most significantly, the McGill campus provided Nobbs with the type of closed vista upon which the artist could best take advantage of both the canvas and frame upon and within which he aspired to make his mark. The University of Alberta also turned to

[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

Nobbs for a comprehensive plan for its newly acquired acreage in the Prairies. An even more pristine opportunity than McGill, Nobbs provided several detailed plans for the site, however, due to budgetary restraints, the effort resulted in just one building. Beyond

Figure 3.6 University of Alberta Master Plan [1912]. Nobbs' design was completed along the rational lines of the City Beautiful movement, thus highlighting the classically-trained architect's diverse skill set. From: Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

McGill's gates, Nobbs designed several large office towers, including the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Building [1914-15], the Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada [1927], and the Drummond Medical Building [1929-30]. Moreover, Nobbs was an equally accomplished domestic architect, designing dozens of homes throughout the wealthy Montreal boroughs of Westmount and Mount Royal.

The chameleonic artistic sensibilities of Professor Nobbs remain the most visible reminder of the Montreal architect's ability to borrow and adapt a blend of architectural tools in order to create his own interpretation of Canadian design. The Arts and Crafts Movement provided Nobbs with a rich material palette and guiding philosophy of design

Figure 3.7 Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Company Building [1914-15] in Montreal. A fine example of Nobbs' commercial architecture, the sturdy stone edifice borrows from several styles, including Gothic Revival and the Chicago School. From Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

from which to ground his own architectural and artistic principles. However, the unique position of privilege and academic authority provided by his posting as Professor and Chair of Architecture at the McGill School of Architecture – the best in the country – allowed Nobbs the academic freedom to take liberties with the architectural medium in ways that his colleagues in private practice could not. More broadly influential than Smith, and more widely known than Maclure, Nobbs' unique position served to place him at the forefront of architectural development in Canada, his countless publications, lectures, and public speaking engagements pushing his agenda both at home and abroad.

Architectural courtesy, identified by Wagg as a defining characteristic of Nobbs' highly principled approach to his trade, succinctly sums up the Montreal architect's thoughtful, studied, and heavily Arts and Crafts-influenced design philosophy.[61] While

[61] Susan Wagg, *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press), 1982, 39.

domestically, Nobbs had most often experimented with the adaptation of various local, or "indigenous" architectural forms, Nobbs' many forays into large-scale, public architecture showcased yet another talent – the sympathetic eye of an architect fascinated by history and science. In the design of his most celebrated works at McGill, Nobbs showcased his exceptional talent for building with, not in spite of, the surrounding historical aesthetic. A theme in his work, Nobbs' eye for tradition, history, and culture, manifested itself in a rare sense of duty and architectural courtesy to his surroundings, something Nobbs was sure to oblige whenever possible – all while still retaining his own, unique brand of Arts and Crafts-inspired design and creative output.

Figure 3.8 Designed with Nobbs' signature blend of English Arts and Crafts and French-inspired Beaux-Arts influences, the interior of the McGill University Student Union Building [1905-6] in Montreal was created in part as an educational tool for his students. From Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

The Union Building, created by Nobbs for McGill in 1905-6 as a student centre, is today the site of the McCord Museum, the building's once rich blend of Arts and Crafts and Beaux-Arts interior decoration, replaced with various artifacts and exhibits dedicated to the history of Montreal. The Union Building was granted to Nobbs as his first major commission following his hiring by McGill. [62] Nobbs rejected early plans that had sought to save costs by facing only a portion of the facade in Montreal greystone, the balance to be finished with plain red brick.[63] A local practice Nobbs had abhorred since his arrival, he succeeded in convincing the University to allow the extra extravagance and began immediately upon construction of the new student centre.[64] The Union Building's exterior, built entirely of Montreal greystone, is a handsome structure, composed of flat,

Figure 3.9 McGill University Student Union Building [1905-6] in Montreal. Another fine example of Nobbs' signature, blended, style of architecture. From Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

[62] Ibid, 13.
[63] Ibid, 14.
[64] Ibid.

uniform blocks of granite accented with simple, mullioned windows recessed and fitted with leaded glass. A heavy portico entrance sits front and centre facing onto Sherbrooke Street, across from the main campus. While the exterior played with an assortment of architectural cues, the interior was predominantly finished in the tradition of the Arts and Crafts, exhibiting here and there touches of the French-inspired Beaux-Arts, thereby placing side-by-side the finest examples of traditional English and French architecture.[65]

The McGill University Redpath Library was part of an eclectic row of buildings, constructed during the architecturally fluid, experimental years of the 1880s and 1890s, a period Nobbs recognized as having for better or worse, set the tone for much of the architectural aesthetic of the campus prior to his arrival in 1903.[66] By 1921, the Richardsonian Romanesque-styled Redpath Library was both out of date and out of space for its ever-increasing collections.[67] Nobbs applied his trademark historic sensibilities towards the task of remodelling and expanding the library with an architectural courtesy in line with his well-established philosophy of design. Passed down to him by his mentors, Lorimer and Lutyens, whose buildings, as Nobbs had once observed, appeared as though they had, "grown and not been planted in their surroundings,"[68] it was only fitting that in the case of the library, Nobbs did all in his power to work with the tools given him. The extension was designed to fit in among the relative architectural chaos that already characterized the block to which the library belonged. That being said, Nobbs did succeed in toning down the block's overwrought splendour, his 1921 addition a much more modern take on a classic, medieval form. In keeping with his Arts and Crafts roots,

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid, 40.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid, 39.

Nobbs was satisfied with the blend of form and function, the tall, castle-like windows carefully placed in order to provide the library stacks the best natural light possible.[69]

Figure 3.10 McGill University Redpath Library Extension [1921] in Montreal. Completed in the Scottish Baronial style for which Nobbs was by then well-known, the extension featured a clever arrangement of windows which allowed for an optimal amount of natural light for reading. From Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

The Pathological Institute, built between 1922 and 1924, is according to Wagg, "perhaps the finest embodiment of Nobbs' sensitivity to the urban landscape."[70] Fashioned loosely after the style of a medieval, Scottish baronial estate, the building conforms to no one form of architectural tradition.[71] In its open-ended aesthetic, the Pathological Institute was designed to blend seamlessly into the surrounding streetscape, beginning with an imposing, late-nineteenth century hospital constructed of heavy stone, and ending with a row of modest Victorian townhouses. The Pathological Institute was to

[69] Ibid, 41.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid, 43.

thus serve as a transitional piece of architecture, bridging the divide between the two. This was precisely the type of challenge that Nobbs thrived upon, one that necessitated the design and construction of a modern building to house the latest in medical advancements and technology, all while maintaining an aesthetic sensibility and reverence for such an important part of the university campus he called home. Echoing the Movement's guiding principles, the Pathological Institute, featuring a well-crafted exterior built of hand-cut stone, showcased the architect's eye for the perfectly imperfect.

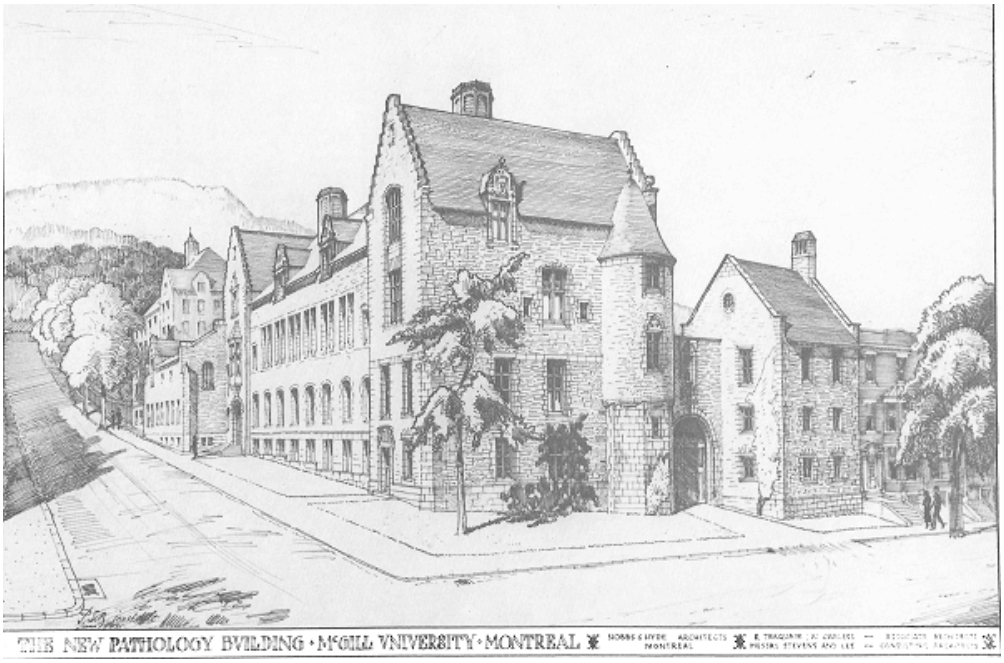

Figure 3.11 Pathology Institute [1922-24] in Montreal. Nobbs' affinity for the Scottish Arts and Crafts aesthetic comes to life in the heavy-cut stone Pathology Building he created for McGill. From Wagg, Susan. *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982.

Inside, Nobbs included a handful personalized touches – historic crests, decorative tributes to the great minds of medicine, a wise owl for benefit of the students, and a Latin inscription placed over the entrance translated as: "Here is the place where death comes

forth again in life."[72] A borrowed motto to be sure, its meaning can be understood to transcend the halls of the laboratories and autopsy theatres, to encompass the essence of what Nobbs and others like him were trying to accomplish with their craft. Wagg interprets Nobbs' implied sentiment in reference to the inscription, stating:

> [E]verything about this building speaks of the triumph of life over death; the structure's purpose and theme, the organic quality of its random masonry and asymmetry, the way in which the old forms and techniques find new uses, indeed the very use of those forms most closely linked with Nobbs' own Scottish heritage.[73]

Whether through the discovery of new medical breakthroughs, new ideas, or new architectural forms and material aesthetics, the design and construction of the Pathological Institute was a celebration of new life and new beginnings.

The contribution made by Percy Nobbs to the Canadian architectural profession was one which reached into both the practical, architectural fabric of Montreal, and nationwide into the education and training of young architecturally-inclined minds for a generation. Endowed simultaneously with a successful professional career and prestigious academic posting, Nobbs was not only able to set the bar high, but was in a position to comment upon its placement. In the same vein as Smith, Nobbs' best, most focused work came when building in his medium of choice – the English Cottage. Albeit for Nobbs, his was expressed with a cultural twist, custom-fitted to blend with what he understood as French-Canadian culture, as well as the geography and challenging climate that had fascinated him since his arrival. More experimental in his design philosophy, and by choice less of an artistic purist than Smith, Nobbs' Arts and Crafts-inspired designs were allowed to meander, to mix with Quebécois or Scottish influences as the architect saw fit. While Smith's cottages seemed to offer a little piece of England in the midst of

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[72] Ibid, 44.
[73] Ibid.

an English city, Nobbs was able to provide the well-to-do of Canada's largest metropolis, situated in the heart of Quebec, with homes that reflected the cultural heritage of both French and English Canada. Meanwhile, across the Rocky Mountains to the West Coast, in a corner of Canada far removed from the nation's cultural and financial centres, Samuel Maclure was busy making the best of what is broadly considered to be the most beautiful, lush, and certainly most temperate region of the country.

Call of the Wild: Samuel Maclure and His Craft

Victoria, British Columbia, at the turn of the last century, served as the westernmost outpost of the British Commonwealth, a faraway corner of the English-speaking world that clung to its colonial heritage and traditional aristocratic social structure far longer than any other in the Dominion. Situated on the southern tip of Vancouver Island, with its temperate climate, lush greenery, and massive canopy of hardy rainforests, Victoria offered its insular collection of well-to-do British expatriates-come-Canadian politicians, capitalists, and Navy officers, a comfortable slice of the exotic in an otherwise cold, vast country. The Provincial Capital, the heart of the West Coast lumber and mining trade, and the home of the British Imperial Naval Fleet of the Pacific until the end of the First World War, Victoria was highly overrepresented by a wealthy, British-born elite whose lifestyles and social standing demanded homes that provided them with a level of style and comfort befitting their station. Though ironic as it may have been, it would be the creative efforts of Samuel Maclure, the first white man said to have been born in the former colony to pioneer parentage, that would see to the housing and furnishing of the premiere families of British Columbian high society.

Unlike Eden Smith or Percy Nobbs, Samuel Maclure lacked the benefit of a formal architectural education, had not rubbed shoulders with William Morris or the Group of Seven, nor had he been offered the Chair of a prestigious university. Furthermore, with his humble start in New Westminster, as the son of a colonial land surveyor and one-time telegraph operator, the British Columbian architect was also bereft of the breadth of social connections and thus the wealth of opportunities that awaited either Smith or Nobbs upon their respective arrivals in Toronto and Montreal. While his professional success would flourish once he relocated to Victoria, the small port town situated at the far corner of the country was provincial even by Canadian standards. Culture, arts, and high society were dwarfed by lumberjacks and miners, yet at the upper echelons, there existed a relatively high ratio of well-to-do British expatriates of high station who were all in need of homes built to their liking. This unique situation allowed Maclure's outstanding artistic and architectural talents to shine, with little or no question ever posed about the architect's education or pedigree. While Smith and Nobbs had more or less been early comers to an already, if just barely, established architectural profession, Maclure had stumbled into it before it had begun. It was not long, however, before Maclure found his artistic muse amidst the natural beauty of his surroundings, his affinity for nature, blended with the bold architectural techniques and artistic principles of his idols, providing Maclure with a potent formula for success.

Maclure set up his Victoria office at the corner of Fort and Government Streets, within what was known, before its destruction by fire in 1910, as the Five Sisters' Block.[74] Having already established himself in New Westminster as an architect two years prior, Maclure was fortunate to have set up his Victoria office just as the newly-

[74] Janet Bingham, *Samuel Maclure: Architect* (Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985), 44.

minted British Columbia Institute of Architects received official sanction in 1892. This timely coincidence favoured Maclure, whose slim credentials would have more than likely delayed or even barred his entry, if not for his earlier practice in New Westminster. Maclure's professional and artistic connections – as a founding member of the British Columbia Society of Fine Arts, and both the Victoria and Vancouver Arts and Crafts Associations – placed him in the company of many talented artists and architects, including Francis Mawson Rattenbury [1867-1935], who designed the British Columbia Parliament Buildings in 1898.[75] Outside of his immediate profession, Maclure had a close relationship with Victoria's fledgling arts scene, including a lifetime friendship with local artist Emily Carr. Maclure's wife Daisy, also a gifted artist, contributed her own nature-inspired designs to many of Maclure's homes, her elegant, floral-patterned, stained glass windows adding a unique personal touch. Further afield, Maclure became familiar with the ever-growing city of Vancouver, in which he spent the final days of his career, though it would be from his base in Victoria that he produced the majority of his work.

The Great Victoria Fire of 1910, which destroyed Maclure's office and most of his architectural drawings, plans, and personal letters, paired with the fact that Maclure was never a public figure of professional or academic authority as were his Central Canadian contemporaries, vastly limited the amount of available archival material. The record of his career, along with his professional and personal correspondences are thus in large part restrained to articles about the architect and his work as taken from the pages of trade journals, local newspapers, and of course, from the architectural record that remains in the form of his numerous domestic works and handful of commercial commissions. For the purposes of this study, Maclure's Victoria oeuvre, considered by Maclure

[75] Ibid, 76-7.

biographer Janet Bingham as his "heyday," will be of primary concern, its impact upon the Pacific Coast, and indeed across the Canadian urban landscape as a whole, to be discussed at length. The pages of the *Canadian Architect and Builder, The Craftsman,* and Victoria's local newspaper, *The Colonist*, have been put to use, the relevant articles within being the best remaining record of Maclure's architectural footprint on paper.

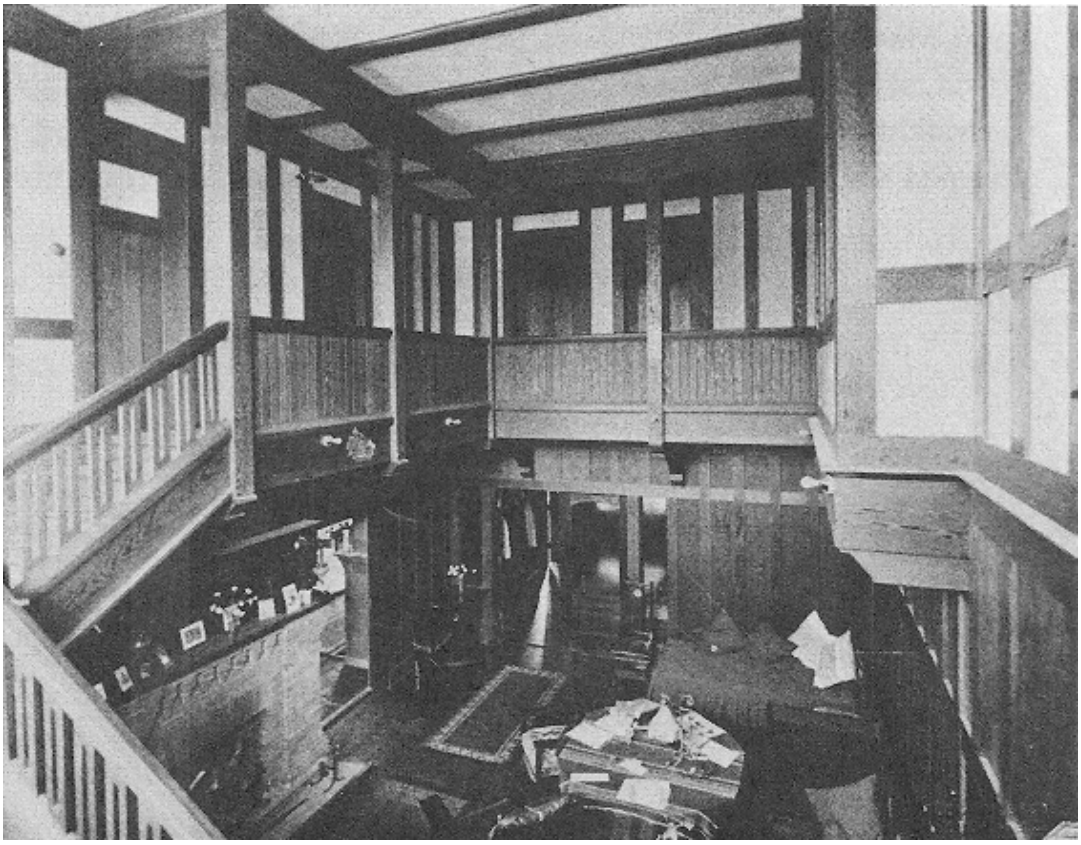

Figure 3.12 Interior, Alexis Martin House [1904], located at 1598 Rockland Avenue in Victoria. Note the strong emphasis upon natural materials, such as Douglas Fir beams and panelling, and the stone fireplace. Featured in *CAB* 22, no. 3 (March 1908): 12-15.

Maclure's design aesthetic can be roughly separated into four distinct architectural categories. His early Queen Anne style, followed by his most popular and well-known Tudor Revival and Craftsman styles, and finally, his somewhat rarer "Maclure Bungalow" style, can together be understood to effectively characterize the

breadth of his domestic work.[76] Furthermore, Maclure's admiration and respect for the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright, with whom he corresponded throughout his entire life, can often be divined from the layout and proportionality of his domestic designs. Blending the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest with what Nobbs' defined as the "English something," that was said to unite Canadian domestic architecture, Maclure, like his Central Canadian counterparts, was able to invent new architectural traditions.

Figure 3.13 The Murray House [1892], located at 403 St. George Street, New Westminster. A good example of Maclure's early work in the Queen Anne style then popular. Image courtesy of New Westminster Public Library. From Bingham, Janet. *Samuel Maclure, Architect*. Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985.

[76] Ibid, 7-9.

Maclure's earliest work within New Westminster dates to the early 1890s, to the time of the then popular Queen Anne Revival, defined by a heavy reliance upon ornate detail work including overlapping fish-scale shingles, turned spindles, and wrap-around verandahs. Maclure's foray into the Queen Anne Revival was made distinctive owing to his penchant for experimentation. The addition of stucco, half-timbering, and other Tudor accents, speak to the British Columbian architect's deft intuition for blending various natural and cultural elements into his work. Largely abandoned by the time he moved to Victoria in 1892, Maclure's early experimentations with Queen Anne led directly to his most renowned styles, Maclure's highly personalized interpretation of the Tudor Revival and Craftsman traditions quickly becoming synonymous with his professional heyday and creative zenith. Maclure's rise to prestige in Victoria, spread according to his daughter Catherine, largely by word of mouth, reportedly boosted Maclure's reputation to the point that he could nary escape the client who had not been directed to his office by one of the architect's many customers – or their newly arrived friends and relations.

Tudor Revival, the most popular choice among Maclure's clientele, prevailed throughout his prime working years in Victoria and Vancouver during the early 1900s. Popular in its day similar to Queen Anne before it, Tudor Revival offered Maclure a far greater degree of creative freedom and artistic license, the rough-hewn, English Cottage-derived style simultaneously steeped in tradition, yet still open to interpretation owing to its many geographical and cultural antecedents. Thus in many ways, Maclure's runaway success with his special brand of Tudor Revival homes across Victoria and Vancouver's most fashionable residential enclaves, owed a significant debt to the architect's Arts an Crafts-based principles of art, architecture, and design. In particular, the medium's

reliance upon natural materials and traditional craftsmanship, as well as its English pedigree, made it the perfect match for Maclure's British Columbian clientele, the West Coast the ideal backdrop for the architect's tireless pursuit of the picturesque. Adopted early on by Maclure, he was quick to add a host of personal touches and quirks, including the geometrically-patterned horizontal rows of double-bisected half-timber squares which to this day remain a tell-tale sign of a "Maclure" home.

Figure 3.14 The Brenchley House [1912], located at 3351 Granville Street in Vancouver. A prime example of Maclure's Tudor Revival style. Image courtesy of Bill McLennan. From Bingham, Janet. *Samuel Maclure, Architect*. Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985.

Craftsman was another style which Maclure liked to work with, implementing natural stone, cedar shingles, and other choice woods, sourced locally, to create homes of unequalled beauty and distinctiveness for his clients. The most overtly American-

influenced of his main design typologies, Maclure's Craftsman homes borrowed many elements from the Prairie Style made famous by Gustav Stickley and Frank Lloyd Wright. While similarly inclined towards the expression of natural materials through traditional craftsmanship and building methods, the Craftsman style was a degree more rigid in its implementation than the English Cottage tradition to which the Tudor Revival style belonged. Bound to a horizontally-anchored sense of proportionality and balance owing to its geographically flat, Prairie roots, the Craftsman style demanded a careful, layered stacking, in which each floor of the home roughly conformed to a separate architectural layer, or tier, denoted by subtle changes in materiality and construction.

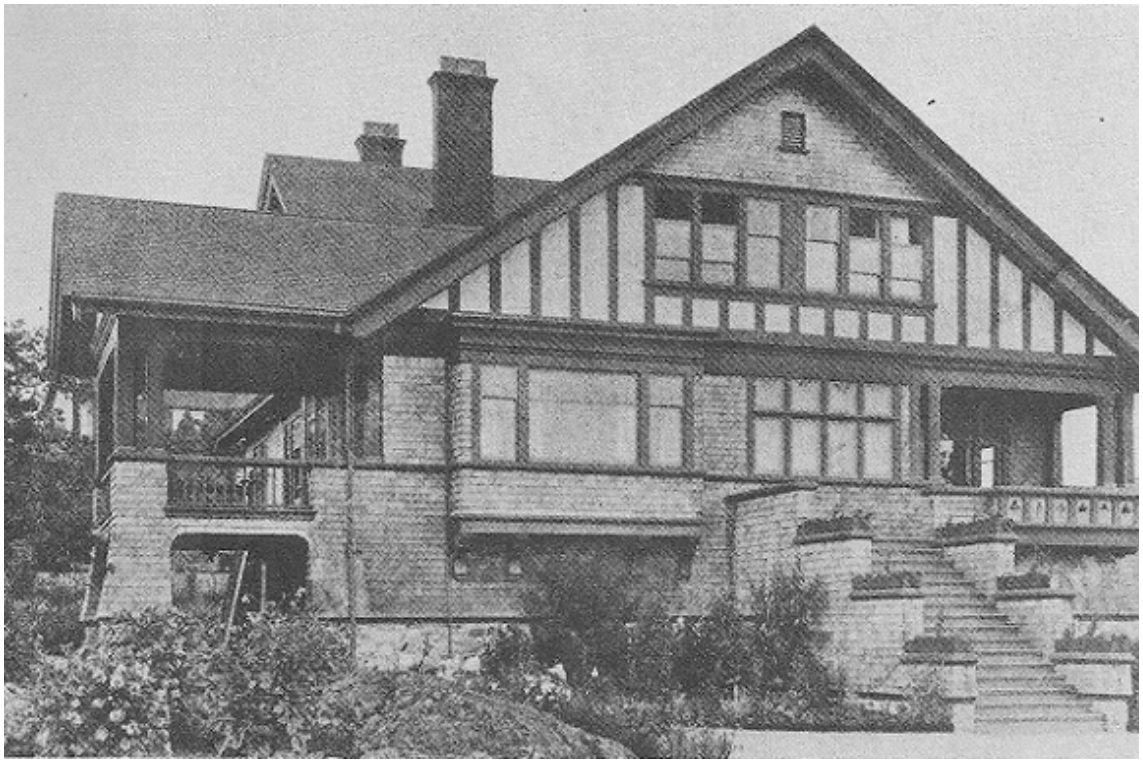

Figure 3.15 Exterior, Alexis Martin House [1904], located at 1598 Rockland Avenue in Victoria. An excellent example of Maclure's Craftsman style, with a low-profile roofline and heavy reliance upon cedar shingles. Featured in *CAB* 22, no. 3 (March 1908): 12-15.

Finally, the "Maclure Bungalow" became yet another personal trademark of the BC architect, the requisite low-slung profile, capped with a hipped roof and oversized dormers, personalized by Maclure through the rather unusual inclusion of vertical half-timbering, which together made for a distinctively bold visual statement.[77] While by no means as popular as his Tudor and Craftsman offerings, the Maclure Bungalow, as it was

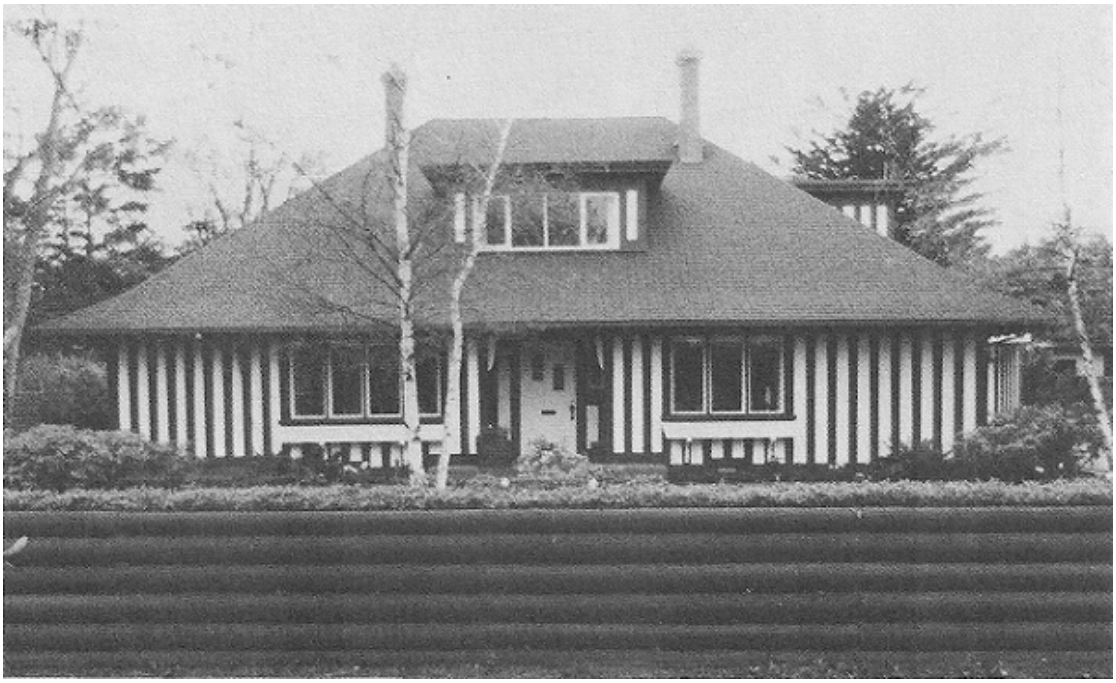

Figure 3.16 Exterior, Marsh House [1923], located at 2450 Windsor Road in Victoria. A fine example of a Maclure Bungalow. Note the distinctive, vertical half-timbering – a Maclure trademark. From Bingham, Janet. *Samuel Maclure, Architect*. Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985.

known, became something of a trademark for the architect, Catherine Maclure's allusion to her father's creation of "a style of his own,"[78] highly representative of Maclure's keen creative passion. With a career spanning over thirty years and roughly 500 projects, Maclure's architectural footprint on the relatively small communities of Victoria and Vancouver was considerable. Without benefit of formal architectural training, the so-

[77] Ibid, 7.
[78] "Catherine Maclure," interview by Imbert Orchard, CBC, 1963, Tape 2, Track 1, pg. 11. Transcript of two audio cassettes, BC Archives Item No. AAAB0805.

called "first native son of British Columbia" was able to transform the face of the new province through a mix of raw ability, a creative spirit, and a strong affinity for invention.

The largest departure from Maclure's body of work exists in the architect's significant contribution to the industrial housing complex known as Clayburn, located on the outskirts of New Westminster. Clayburn was a true, Maclure family enterprise, one that involved nearly every adult member of the large family, including Maclure's father, brother, sister, in-laws, and his wife Daisy.[79] Cleverly christened with an eye towards its industrial purpose, Clayburn was named in the fashion of Victorian-era workers' villages in England, while the impressive brickworks and accompanying kilns, warehouses, and workers' cottages were modelled after twentieth-century company towns. When planning began in 1905, Maclure was selected by his brother Charles to take the project on as head architect and planner.[80] Maclure's first and only attempt at what can be considered urban planning was hailed as a success in its time,[81] the physical record of which can be seen to this day, Clayburn designated as a British Columbia Heritage Site in 1996.[82]

Clayburn provided Maclure with a rare opportunity to showcase his considerable creative talents on a scale much larger than anything he had ever done in private practice. The project presented the architect with a host of new challenges, as the artistic demands of the industrial brickworks and modest, workers' cottages were a stark contrast to those involved in the design of homes for British Columbia's elite. Provided with what Nobbs would have described as a closed vista, Maclure's skilful execution of Clayburn was highly representative of the type of total, or complete design as coveted by followers of

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[79] Bingham, *Samuel Maclure*, 101-112.
[80] Ibid, 104.
[81] Ibid, 105.
[82] "Welcome to Clayburn Village," Clayburn Village, last modified 2009, http://www.clayburnvillage.com

both the City Beautiful and Arts and Crafts Movement. Described by historian John Adams as a picturesque streetscape of pleasantly meandering structures, knit together by a harmonized use of materials and repeated forms, Clayburn was designed with just as much diligence and care as any other work in Maclure's oeuvre.[83] Clayburn Village was built almost entirely from locally sourced and fired buff-coloured bricks for which the site was known, the homes ranging from modest bungalows to two-storey houses in accordance with the rank of their respective occupants, from firer to foreman.[84]

Figure 3.17 Clayburn Village [1905]. Photographed in 1918, the Plant Manager's house sits serenely amidst its surroundings, this and the other homes in Clayburn Village designed to mimic life in the suburbs. From Bingham, Janet. *Samuel Maclure, Architect*. Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985.

While all of the homes were well-built and fully functional, the manager's houses were especially designed with many Arts and Crafts-inspired features, including the use of ample woodwork, a preference for casement windows, and the crafting of intricate,

[83] John D. Adams, "Clayburn; A Study of its Brick Industry, its Architecture and its Preservation," (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1976), 41.
[84] Bingham, *Samuel Maclure*, 105-6.

locally sourced brick fireplaces.[85] The overall effect of Maclure's unusually – for something as utilitarian as a brickworks – artful, and well thought-out urban plan, highlighted the power of good design as a force of progress and modernity even in the least inspiring of environments. Despite the smokestacks, kilns, and clay pits, Maclure was able to bring out the picturesque from a landscape scraped clean and fashioned towards the solitary purpose of firing clay into bricks.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, no mention of Maclure is complete without a description of his most celebrated commission – Hatley Park. Begun in 1905, the same year in which Maclure began work on Clayburn, Hatley Park was the most lavish, most publicized commission of his career. Upon its completion in 1910, *The Colonist* heaped praise upon Hatley Park, its debut marked with a two-page Sunday Supplement tucked between the coronation of King George V, and a humorous featurette on the modern day perils inherent to the trend for ever larger ladies' hats. *The Colonist* predicted that the castle-like estate at the water's edge, perched magnificently upon its manicured, eight hundred acre lot, and built for the princely sum of half a million dollars, represented the "finest country estate in North America."[86] Several large photographs appeared alongside detailed descriptions of the decorative details of the home, making much of the hand-crafted woodwork, expert masonry, and handsome friezes that adorned the Lieutenant-Governor's future residence. Maclure was also the subject of much praise, *The Colonist* going so far as to declare the local architect "the most expert architectural artist on [the] coast, [Hatley Park] a masterpiece on which he would be proud to carve his signature."[87]

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[85] Ibid, 106.
[86] "The Mansion in Hatley Park," *The Colonist*, May 8, 1910, 2.
[87] Ibid, 1.

Figure 3.18 Hatley Park [1905-10]. Built by Maclure for Lieutenant-Governor James Dunsmuir, Hatley Park was designed to evoke a sense of wealth and power. Part mansion, part castle, the grandiose estate and its sprawling grounds incorporate a blend of architectural influences, from Gothic Revival to Arts and Crafts. From "The Mansion in Hatley Park," *The Colonist*, May 8, 1910.

Two years prior to the story in *The Colonist,* the *CAB* had been the first to feature the commission for Hatley Park in its April, 1908 issue, making reference to the drawing up of plans for the residence of Lieutenant-Governor James Dunsmuir. The *CAB* was similarly complimentary towards both the project and its architect, in the case of the latter, going out of its way to boast of Maclure being "virtually self-taught... not hampered by tradition [and having thus] originated many new styles."[88] The industrious, creative, and most importantly, self-made, pioneer character of Maclure was the focus of

[88] "Lieutenant-Governor Dunsmuir's New House," *CAB* 22, no. 4 (April 1908): 26, http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/cab/index.htm

the editor's praise, the residence of the Honourable James Dunsmuir to have been, "one of the most beautiful and comfortable homes in the Dominion."[89] To this end, the *CAB* article concludes with one final affirmation of the pioneer-born Maclure's unique, architectural talents, citing the architect's impressive list of wealthy clients, some from as far away as California, and that reports of Maclure's superior designs had graced the pages of trade papers and art journals in the United States and Britain.[90] Maclure was described not only as a fine architect, but one who Canadians ought to be proud to recognize as one of their own – native-born, and thus ostensibly endowed with the creative, industrious spirit of the Canadian Frontier. A breath of fresh air after the dark days of the 1880s, when the architectural profession had struggled for local recognition, and against foreign invaders, the pioneer-bred Maclure, as described by the editor, had succeeded in making his mark, not only for himself but for all Canadian architects.

Hatley Park is indeed a fine example of early twentieth-century splendour, and of the fashionable, castle-home hybrid that for a generation bound by the Gilded Age and the Roaring Twenties, signified the highest in artistic taste for the newly wealthy and wellborn alike. The Arts and Crafts Movement, though it informed many of the disparate aspects of the great home, such as the strong reliance upon local materials, the random, snail creep pattern of the exterior masonry, and the extensive use of dark, masculine tones, textures, and decoration, was significantly tempered by the studied historicism that helped create the more castle-like portions that in many ways dominate its look and feel. The publicity garnered by the construction of Hatley Park was widespread, having gained mention in the Canadian trade journal, *Construction* in 1916, and then again that same

[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.

year, in the *Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art*, in London. Though Hatley Park can be said to be atypical of Maclure's work – as argued in Leonard Eaton's 1971 study owing to its overwhelming scale, castle-like appearance, and the architect's rare foray into architectural historicism – the home remains a key Maclure commission, to be accepted as part of his larger canon of work.[91] Alternatively, it can be argued that the most important aspect of Hatley Park was not how, or why, or in what style it was built, or for whom, but that it was Maclure, the self-taught, self-made man of pioneer parentage, who succeeded in building one of the finest local examples of early twentieth-century opulence and style. Hence Hatley Park, as well as Maclure's success more broadly, can be linked to the part played by the architect in regards to the development of a Canadian architectural tradition, aesthetic, and style, as expressed across the West Coast and beyond. Lastly, it cannot be forgotten that despite Maclure's liberal use of artistic license, that when it came time to build "one of the most beautiful and comfortable home in the Dominion," it was completed principally in the tradition of the Arts and Crafts.

Of Maclure, Smith, and Nobbs, only Maclure can be said to fully represent the archetype of the ostensibly frontier-forged, self-made, all-Canadian architect. With an equally prolific architectural output as his more classically trained contemporaries, Maclure was able to place his mark on the urban landscape of British Columbia, many of his beautiful homes still standing in what remain as the most exclusive neighbourhoods in Victoria and Vancouver. Maclure took pride in working with the rich material palette of his native British Columbia, incorporating the finest natural woods, stones, and tiles into his designs. Craftsmanship, too, was of the utmost importance. From his early days in New Westminster, through his heyday in Victoria, and on to his final working years in

[91] Leonard Eaton, *The Architecture of Samuel Maclure* (Victoria: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1971).

Vancouver, Maclure stayed true to his Arts and Crafts roots, working diligently to express the natural beauty of his home province through every one of his commissions.

Maclure's increasingly experimental career benefited immensely from his early Queen Anne works in New Westminster, his later Tudor Revival, and highly popular Craftsman creations in Victoria and Vancouver, highlighting Maclure's artistic growth as he matured into a master architect of his own making. Indeed, Maclure's blending of British and American design sensibilities and styles, which he expressed through the natural splendour of the local landscape, served to shape Maclure's innate design sense and creative impulse. Derived from a diverse set of Arts and Crafts-inspired influences, and created as though sprung from the ground upon which they stood, Maclure's domestic work was able to connect with local tastes. Far removed as well from the endless haranguing over the fate of the profession, as experienced in Ontario and Quebec, Maclure was able to avoid being too deeply drawn into the politics that at any moment threatened to destabilize the Canadian architectural profession. Remote, and kept busy by both his growing roster of clients, and an endless stream of esteemed visitors, including famed novelist and Imperialist Sir Rudyard Kipling, Maclure was content to carry on with his business, rarely if ever, leaving the province.

When Samuel Maclure passed away in 1929 at the age of 68, he had been retired for just three years, having kept active until illness and advancing age had finally forced him to slow down and retire. Maclure's early death meant that his career ended while he was still very much on top of the world he had done so much to create. Born at roughly the same time as both Smith and Nobbs, Maclure similarly lived through a time of great change – the realm of architecture being no exception. Unlike Smith and Nobbs,

however, who lived well into the post-war era, Maclure never witnessed the end of the Arts and Crafts Movement, nor did he live to see the destruction of his life's work in the face of what had, by the mid-twentieth century, come to be known as progress.

Along St. George Street near the heart of the University of Toronto, large swaths of Smith's grandest homes, those he had designed and built for many of Toronto's cultural elite, were ruthlessly pulled down in the 1960s to make way for nondescript apartment blocks. The few that remain were almost all converted into rooming houses, serving today as fraternity and sorority clubhouses which have variously been kept in a state of repair consistent with their use. In Montreal, at the University of McGill, where Nobbs lived out his illustrious career, the university added a series of highly unsympathetic additions and alterations to the buildings he had designed. The Redpath Library Extension, for example, received a bland, concrete slab addition, so carelessly tacked onto the old building that it completely blocked out the natural light that Nobbs had engineered so as that it would gently illuminate the stacks. Nearby, the McGill Student Union Building was completely gutted, all of its beautiful, Arts and Crafts furnishings and decorative adornments removed in an effort to convert the building into a museum. While the museum conversion at least represents a relatively noble cause, the general lack of regard for the architectural contributions of a figure of such cultural significance to McGill and to the City of Montreal, highlights the realities of a time not so long ago when matters of architectural heritage were largely ignored.

Among Canadians, the desire for handsome, solidly built, comfortable homes remained strong, the suburbs of large cities continuing to be built very much in the same way well into the 1940s. Mouldings may have shrunk in size, the intricacy of woodwork

may have simplified, and the availability of good carvers, stone masons, and glassmakers may have dwindled, but the homes remained very much the same in configuration and style. Universities, too, clung to the old ways well past the prime of well-known styles including the aptly-named Collegiate Gothic that came to dominate the majority of campuses built before the Second World War. The University of Western Ontario, for example, continued to build its grand, limestone colleges and dormitories well into the 1960s. Elsewhere, however, especially in urban centres, countless magnificent, historic edifices were not so fortunate, falling victim to the forces of urban renewal.

Maclure, and in a larger sense, the City of Victoria as well, benefited greatly, at least in an architectural sense, from the combined realities of a remote location, limited population base, and thus a relatively low pressure in regards to urban renewal. The steel and glass condominiums that here and there dot the edges of Victoria's desirable waterfront, or the modern, 1960s-era campus of the University of Victoria in suburban Saanich, point to a city that has not so much stood still, as it has grown and evolved at a relatively slow pace since Maclure's day. However, to the casual observer or day-tripper from Vancouver, nothing much has changed. For many Canadians, Victoria remains, whether worthy of the honour or not, known as the most British city in Canada. Whether or not this characterization persists is a matter for another discussion, yet what can be confidently argued, is that in Maclure's day, and for long after, the essential British-Canadian character of Victoria was never much in question. The cultural elite, ensconced amid their respective circles of power, commerce, and political influence at the turn of the last century, were virtually all British-Canadians, either British-born or of British parentage. At the westernmost edge of the British Empire, the elite of Victoria's high

society built mansions and estates for themselves that reflected both their heritage and social standing, while showcasing their intrepid spirit, and ready embrace of their beautiful, if strange, new surroundings. The Arts and Crafts Movement offered the wealthy and upwardly mobile middle class among them, a style of domestic architecture that allowed for a comfortable piece of Britain upon the Pacific Coast. Overflowing with the picturesque, Maclure's Tudor- and Craftsman-inspired homes, with their naturalistic gardens and rocky, oversized lots, provided his clientele with just the right balance of beautiful and exotic – a wilderness tamed into a physical expression of modern Canada.

Lastly, Maclure's experience with the Arts and Crafts Movement also differed from that of his Central Canadian counterparts with regard to the nature of the built environment – along with the professional one – in which he operated. Victoria in 1900 was a very different place to Toronto and Montreal, the latter especially having been established centuries prior to the relatively late European settlement of the West Coast. Maclure would have arrived in his new home on Vancouver Island to find a population of no more than fifteen to twenty thousand, the city centre measuring only a few square blocks, its muddy, unpaved streets lined with a mix of wooden and brick buildings. The outlying neighbourhoods in which Maclure made his fortune were mostly made up of large lots – standing in for Nobbs' open vistas or Smith's hidden enclaves – bought on speculation from buyers whose worldly possessions were en route from Britain on large steamships travelling either via East Asia or around the rocky cliffs of Cape Horn. At the edge of civilization, as many among Maclure's clients would have understood their place in the world, every sight, sound, and smell would have been strange and unfamiliar.

Born into this environment, Maclure was one of the few locally-born whites, let alone craftsmen or architects, who could truly call the West Coast home. Given the praise that was offered towards Maclure, specifically that aimed at his unusual frontier heritage, it is reasonable to assume that his clients would have been optimistic in their selection of a "native" architect. The advantages of hiring an individual who was, by simple birthright, viewed as the best qualified person for the job – having been naturally endowed with an innate knowledge of local materials and climate – would have all but spoken for themselves. The fact that Maclure also happened to be a naturally gifted architect, with a keen eye for the picturesque and all of the latest trends, and had built homes for the wealthy as far away as California, would have only further solidified his credentials. Endowed with a deep connection to the Arts and Crafts Movement, Maclure remains among the most important Canadian domestic architects of his day.

Conclusion

The physical imprint of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement can be seen across the country, from the West Coast, through the Prairies, and to the great cities of Ontario and Quebec, and on to the East. In Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria, where the nation's architectural leaders of early twentieth-century, urban, domestic architecture practiced their trade, their impact has been felt the greatest. The houses built by Smith, Nobbs, Maclure, and others skilled in the crafting of modern, comfortable homes built to last, have left a living legacy in Canada, one that can be said to have pointed the way forward for future generations of architects and clients alike. More than homebuilders, these individuals were able to craft entire neighbourhoods and cities, to impart their

vision of a new, modern, domestic architecture - built by and for Canadians, and constructed from the same raw materials that had made the country what is was.

The arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement into mainstream Canadian consciousness in many ways brought about the first real expressions of professional pride, at first just among architectural circles, but quickly spreading beyond the pages of trade journals and art exhibitions, to newspapers both domestic and foreign. Canada's architects, craftsman, and artisans were able for the first time to point to real progress, the advances and incursions of foreign talent, either from the United States or Britain stemmed at last. The Movement's focus upon the usage of natural materials and local craftsmanship fit perfectly into the national desire for professional autonomy and patriotic pride. Moreover, the Arts and Crafts' relatively long tenure in Canada, in some cases surviving well past mid-century, is a testament in equal measure to both the realities of the lasting endurance of English-Canadian tastes, along with a strong, national desire to emblazon physical expressions of English-Canadian identity upon the landscape. Thus in their respective solutions to the problems faced by urban reformers at the turn of the last century, Canada's Arts and Crafts masters were highly influential in bringing about the debut of modern domestic life. Executed with a proudly nationalistic spirit, and material quality that spoke to the masses, the work of architects such as Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure resonates just as well today as it did a century ago. Working as part of a much larger, interconnected web of cultural influence, Canada's Arts and Crafts progenitors and promoters were not alone – their cause shared by many among Canada's majority Anglo-Canadian, cultural elite, as shall be the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter Four:

The Cult of the Canadian Craft Movement

Introduction

In a column written just months before his death, Augustus Bridle [1868-1952], founder of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, and long-time Music Critic for the *Toronto Star*, praised a recent radio broadcast of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* on the CBC, for being, "so excellent in tone,"[1] that for a moment, he was convinced it must have been performed by the BBC. Bridle's surprise at the pleasing harmonies being Canadian-made and not those "of some English chorus,"[2] brings to light two stubborn home truths still very present in Canada by mid-century. The first of these was that as a rule, British, and perhaps begrudgingly, American, creative talent almost always took precedence over that which existed locally. Paired to the first, the second related to the uphill battle for fame, fortune, and even at times, simple recognition, that seemed to unite the small pool of local artists, musicians, and craftspeople who struggled to make a living amid a home audience easily distracted by the bright lights ever on the horizon. Bringing theses truths to light, the *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, 1949*-1951 [Massey Commission] – which reported Canadian culture to be anaemic, thinly spread, and all but lost beneath the shadow of the United States[3] – only served to reinforce the common perception that unless something was done, Canadian culture, if it existed at all, would forever be banished to the margins. Indeed, if someone as in tune with the pulse of Canada's arts scene as Augustus Bridle

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[1] Augustus Bridle, "Recall Old Church Choirs Singing G. and S. Operas," *The Toronto Star*, September 20, 1952, 13.
[2] Ibid.
[3] *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949–1951*, Library and Archives Canada.

could be fooled by a better than expected CBC performance, what were the chances that Canada's creative class would ever be recognized or valued by the average citizen?

Discussed at length throughout this study, many of the same difficulties that faced the architectural profession within Canada remained a challenge for numerous other related and unrelated industries for decades following the onset of the twentieth century. Dwarfed by an economy of scale in the face of the United States, and bound by cultural and latent colonial ties to Britain, many among Canada's Anglophone creative and professional classes had little recourse to compete effectively either at home or abroad. Tariffs and other artificial controls and regulations could only go so far, and even then often received only lukewarm reception – a sentiment shared by both artisan and consumer alike. In order to survive, Canada's domestic industries needed to band together in a common cause. Unions, guilds, and professional associations needed to be formed in order restore and maintain a sense of autonomy. Thus to a considerable degree, Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement was a product of several interrelated creative and professional industries. To these ends, members of the OAA may very well have held memberships to the Arts and Letters Club, Ontario Society of Artists, the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and half a dozen others. Given the popularity of creative and professional organizations that formed in Canada around the turn of the last century, and the close-knit nature of their various memberships and subsequent cross-pollination of ideas, this chapter demonstrates the degree to which Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement flourished as part of a complex, highly interconnected network.

Furthermore, this chapter brings to light the similarities that existed at the core of many of the largest, most influential organizations involved with the development of the

Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. Forming the backbone of nearly every professional association, craft organization, and artists' society to form across Canada at the turn of the last century, were calls to nationalism, patriotism, and a general sense of duty and pride in the creation and upkeep of national traditions. These organizations laid claim to a particular view of the nation and of Canadian nationalism that spoke deeply to the times and circumstances that then defined English Canada. Whether it be Laurier's, Goldwin Smith's, the Group of Seven's, Bridle's, or that built by Smith, Nobbs, or Maclure, the Canada described as fit for protection and improvement through artistry, craftsmanship, education, and professional pride, was one whose place in the world seemed to depend upon the good work of its dedicated men and women of industry, skill, and patriotism.

The Arts and Letters Club [1908], Group of Seven [1920], Arts and Crafts Society of Canada [1903], and Canadian Handicrafts Guild [1906], all represent attempts to secure for both themselves and for Canada more broadly, a tradition of art, craft, and industry that was at once Canadian, local, and appealing to a mass audience. For each group, comprised in many cases with overlapping memberships, the arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement to Canada provided them with a common cause over and above that which could be invoked purely upon nationalistic, or even strictly self-promotional grounds. If, as Nobbs put it, Canada needed to invent artistic and artisanal traditions of its own in order to flourish as a culture and a people, who better than those equipped with the education, skills, and technical acumen necessary to bring Canada into the twentieth century? Thus to the cultural elite of Canada's urban centres, to the communities of artists, craftspeople, architects, and educated men and women of letters who had the time,

resources, and financial interest in the Craft Movement's promotion and survival at heart, the task of cultural invention was left to survive or perish on their watch.

In terms of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, and to the domestic revival with which it was intertwined, the collaborative relationship among Canada's creative classes fostered a brand of Canadian nationalism that was, in their view, more nuanced and independently minded than those which had come before. Though united by "an English something," as characterized by Nobbs, Canada's modern domestic form was not the proprietary product of any one architect, city, or region of Canada, just as it was not, as evidenced in Montreal, the sole domain of English Canada. This being said, whether in the form of Smith's unique twist on the English cottage in Toronto, Nobbs' playful blending of French and English Canadian building traditions in Montreal, or Maclure's own brand of English domesticity made rugged and wild by material palette of the Pacific Coast, this "English something," was never far out of sight. Designed and built as the embodiment of middle-class Canadian propriety and character, and marketed to a clientele that fit well within the margins of modern conceptions of domestic comfort and style, Canada's Arts and Crafts cottages, bungalows, and grand estates were equal part home and statement piece. A status symbol in their day, a bespoke Arts and Crafts home quickly became the ultimate accessory, the popular conception of the fashionable, Canadian home, complete with a Group of Seven print hung above an inglenook fireplace, came to define the standard to which many middle-class homeowners aspired.

The arrival of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement coincided with the emergence of an interdependent marketplace for arts, crafts, textiles, furniture, and homes, created with an aesthetic that placed as high a value on form and function, as its

consumers did upon their acquisition and subsequent fashionable arrangement. The joining of forces among associations such as the Arts and Letters Club, Group of Seven, Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and Canadian Handicrafts Guild, united Canada's domestic cultural producers at a time when mechanical reproduction, mass production, and foreign markets had begun to negatively impact Canada's cultural traditions and commercial landscape. Just as the OAA and PQAA had sought to both bolster their cause and increase their domestic market share through organization, so, too, did the nation's artists, craftspeople, and the those adjacent to the business of cultural construction and production who themselves were in a position to profit through investment, patronage, and support. Legitimized by a common narrative that Canadian culture and domestic industry were under threat, and gifted with a cultural phenomenon that held high the value of the preservation and promotion of domestic artistry and local craftsmanship, the progenitors of the Canadian Craft Movement were quick to join forces. Finding safety in numbers, the men and women behind the nationalist, protectionist impulse that helped create the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement served to unite the nation's cultural elite via the creation of a complex network of cultural influence.

Lastly, this chapter explores the politics of gender, race, and class that pervaded the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. For while the Movement followed the societal norms of the day, and private organizations such as the Arts and Letters Club remained strictly male until the 1980s, others, such as the mixed company Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, helped bridge the gender divide that existed between the former and the female-run Canadian Handicrafts Guild. In terms of race, the rosters of these and other similar organizations reveal a long list of names that betray the notion that the task of

cultural creation was left solely to white, English, Anglo-Saxon men and women. German and Eastern European names are not out of place among the many "Smith's," "MacDonald's," and "McKenzie's" that predominate the registers of Canada's elite clubs and professional organizations of the early twentieth century. Indeed, Frank Hans Johnston [1888-1949], of the Group of Seven, believed enough in the marketability of a foreign-sounding name that he legally changed his to "Franz" in 1927, thereby launching what proved to be a successful solo career.[4] Among the majority female membership of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, more than any other group, the commercial inclusion of immigrant and Indigenous craftswomen and their wares was central to their larger mission. In terms of class, while it is more difficult to gauge the personal fortunes of various membership roles, it is once again inaccurate to suggest that as a rule these clubs and associations were only for the wealthy. Although Eden Smith felt it necessary to use to the best possible advantage his mysterious origins and enigmatic back-story in order to ingratiate himself into the inner circles of Canada's cultural elite, membership dues within professional associations such as the OAA, and craft organizations such as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, were purposefully kept low out of a keen desire to attract as many as possible to their ranks. Thus, while the executive committees of any given association or club were likely to hail from the upper-middle classes, the general membership was often constructed to be more democratic by design. The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was the product of an interconnected web of Canada's cultural elite, supported by a significant number of professionally motivated active participant members, hailing from a range of occupations and professions.

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[4] Joan Murray, "Franz Johnston," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, December 19, 2007, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/francis-hans-johnston/

The Arts and Letters Club of Toronto

"In the 'consumingly commercial' City of Toronto,"[5] as begins the Arts and Letters Club's first pamphlet, taking a playful shot at the offhanded critique of the city by Sir Rudyard Kipling, "there came together a gathering of art workers and art lovers, at a place known as the St. Charles Inn."[6] From the start, the Club was to represent the five pillars of art, the carefully selected L-A-M-P-S, to include the disciplines of Literature (including journalism), Architecture, Music, Painting, and Sculpture.[7] The author of the pamphlet, ostensibly Bridle himself, known for his classically trained wit, had not come to this acronym by chance, LAMPS being both a reference to the luminary personalities and professionals, "a good many lights,"[8] that would make up the club, and to English art critic and theorist John Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, published in 1849. Among those at the inaugural gathering, it is reported that an inspiring program of music, poetry, and remarks were provided by well-known choral conductor, Dr. A. S. Vogt [1861-1926], a favourite of Bridle's, along with artist George A. Reid [1860-1947], a mutual acquaintance of Bridle and Eden Smith, followed by celebrated Canadian graphic artist and Arts and Crafts-influenced historical illustrator C. W. Jefferys [1869-1951], and prominent Toronto architect W. A. Langton [1854-1933]. The Club's debut publication is replete with Latin quips, classical literary references, and obscure musical theory-based puns. It was an Old Boys' club, but one which would be dominated not so much by discussions of power and empire, but by the latest show, performance, or gallery opening.

[5] "A Gathering of the Arts," *A Gathering of the Arts* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1908) 3.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

The proceedings were concluded with a rendition of the Club's so-called "English Version" of *O Canada!*, transformed into a romantic tribute to the wilderness and adventure that was then understood to define Canada's early history:

O Canada! by camp and smoke and tree,
Stern voyageurs went forth for love of thee;
Thy rivers bold they tracked of old
Thro' forest, flood and foam;
O'er seas of land, by mountains grand,
They reared the North-man's home[9]

Taken from the third verse, the example above is representative of the rest of the Club's re-worked lyrics, which were paired with an illustration by C. W. Jefferys, and accompanied on the following page with the original 1881 sheet music by Calixa Lavillée [1842-1891]. The illustration by Jefferys features a highly romanticized interpretation of the early days of European settlement, the statuesque, French *voyageur* proudly holding a Fleur-de-Lis emblazoned flag while two Indigenous men paddle by in the background. The frame is decorated on top with a Union Jack overlaid with a Fleur-de-Lis, while the bottom of the illustration features a prominent maple leaf nestled among three pinecones. From an aesthetic standpoint, it is important to note the purposeful, stylistic referencing of the type of line drawing common to medieval, illuminated manuscripts, of which adherents to the Arts and Crafts Movement would have been highly familiar.

Taken as a whole, *A Gathering of the Arts*, though just nine pages, serves as an excellent starting point towards understanding both the rationale and mindset behind the origins of one of the longest enduring organizations dedicated to the arts in Canada. Beyond the clever word play and fanciful illustrations, including the highly stylized, medievalist, LAMPS crest by fellow founding member, J.E.H MacDonald [1873-1932],

[9] "'O Canada!' An English Version," *A Gathering of the Arts* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1908), 8-9.

Figure 4.1 Voyageur illustration by C. W. Jefferys [1908]. This illustration accompanied the verses from the "English Version" of *O Canada!* as found in the first pamphlet produced by the Arts and Letters Club. Part of what became a regular series of artistic representations of Canadian history, Jefferys' skill with line drawing and medieval-style illuminations, highlight the level of historicism that adherents to the Arts and Crafts Movement brought to their work. From "'O Canada!' An English Version," *A Gathering of the Arts* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1908).

later of Group of Seven fame, the membership of the Arts and Letters Club embodied the spirit of a national ethos well-primed to embrace the arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement with open arms. Joined by a young Vincent Massey [1887-1967], and frequented during its early years by guests including Sir Wilfrid Laurier [1841-1919], and many luminaries from Britain, the United States, and Europe, the Club was a powerhouse of culture at the heart of English Canada. The first generation of the Club was comprised of a collection of leading Canadian literary, musical, and creative minds, with many wealthy patrons of the arts among them. The Club, its members, and its early history, provide a window into the multifaceted interpersonal relationships and cultural movements that were in play as the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement found its place.

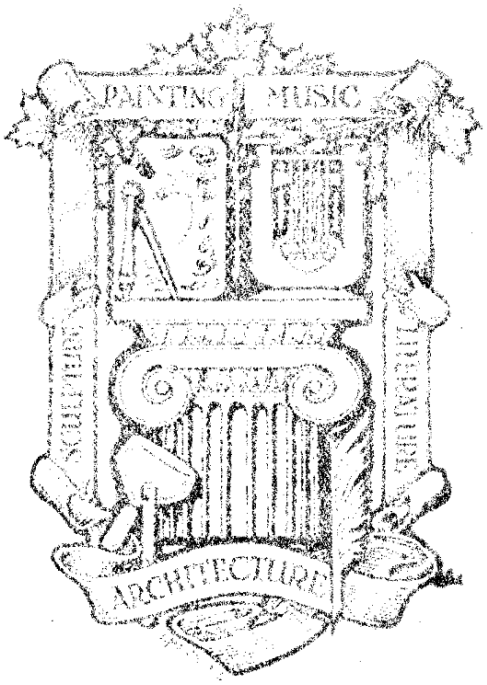

Figure 4.2 Crest by J. E. H. MacDonald [1908]. The official "LAMPS" crest by future Group of Seven member J. E. H. MacDonald, as featured within the Arts and Letters Club's first pamphlet, lays out the core aims of the arts-based club. From "A Gathering of the Arts," *A Gathering of the Arts* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1908)

According to Club lore, founding member Augustus Bridle, lost the Club's most sacred document – the Constitution of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto. The Constitution was redrawn five years later, laying out the Club's guiding principles, rules and regulations, and a full roster and directory of all members up to 1917. A who's who of the Toronto arts scene, members included, artists Gustav Hahn [1866-1962], C. W. Jefferys, George A. Reid, and eventually every future member of the Group of Seven; architects W. A. Langton, Eden Smith, and Henry Sproatt [1866-1934]; and musicians Richard Tattersall and A. S. Vogt. While members lived in many different parts of the city, there were a great number of addresses from Toronto's wealthiest, most exclusive neighbourhoods, including Rosedale, Forest Hill, the Annex, and the old millionaire's rows on Jarvis and Sherbourne Streets. Using the Group of Seven as an example, Lawren Harris lived in a mansion along Queen's Park, while Frank Carmichael [1890-1945] lived in rural Thornhill, and Frank Johnston in the similarly rural York Mills. J. E. H.

MacDonald, on the other hand, is listed as living at the Group of Seven's Eden Smith-designed Studio Building in Rosedale.[10] Wychwood Park, the former artists' colony and home to several of Eden Smith's best Arts and Crafts homes, is also well-represented, being the home of Gustav Hahn (built by Smith), George Reid, Canadian poet and author Edward Alan Sullivan [1868-1947], and Charles Trick Curelly [1876-1957], clergyman, archaeologist, and first director of the Royal Ontario Museum.[11] With such members, it is not difficult to imagine the extent to which the connections made within the Club proved to be advantageous to the many artists, architects, and craftspeople whose livelihoods depended almost solely upon patronage and support from their well-heeled peers.

According to Bridle's 1945 history of the Club, the organization's early "nomad days,"[12] were modest by design, purportedly at the wishes of founding president, W. A. Langton, that all members "conform to the tradition of arts in poverty."[13] By 1909, after exhausting a short list of temporary accommodations, the Club leased the upper floor of a disused, draughty court house at 57 Adelaide Street East in Toronto. The modest new headquarters was accessed through a back alley entrance, shared by the Toronto Mounted Police, who used the space as a dung heap. To enter, one had to climb a steep, narrow, spiral staircase, an obstacle that frustrated efforts to import the many accoutrements of an elite private club, from a rented grand piano to elaborate stage sets and costumes, along with Club members and their guests. The Chairman of the House Committee, Eden Smith, pledged to design and build a great stone fireplace, a gesture likely as magnanimous as it was self-serving. Derricked up the staircase stone-by-stone, the "fifty

[10] "List of Resident Members," *Constitution of the Arts and Letters Club, Toronto* (Toronto: Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, 1917), 12-17.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Augustus Bridle, *The Story of the Club* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1945), 1.
[13] Ibid.

ton" Ohio sandstone fireplace was assembled and engineered into the wall using large steel beams. Immortalised by Club lore, the great hearth was celebrated in style, with a night of merrymaking, poetic ballads, and a dramatic production titled, *Then Came Fire*.

From the outset, the Arts and Letters Club hosted many prestigious guests, drawn mainly from the art world, as well as those from among the government and private enterprise. Part of what Bridle jestingly described as a revolving door of "pungent forget-me-nots,"[14] it is reported by the founder that the Club never lost sight of its "Bohemian democracy."[15] Upon then ex-Prime Minister Laurier's storied luncheon at the Club in 1913, the distinguished guest was greeted in a most unorthodox manner, boisterously cheered by a room of firmly seated, napkin-waving diners, all of this to the tune of a trio of musicians who spontaneously broke into song to mark the occasion. This level of casual familiarity in the presence of a former prime minister is described as one of the enduring hallmarks of the Club. Presumably above condescending to convention, Bridle describes "the Club, in some of its variable moods, [as] no respecter of persons."[16]

Reverence for the Arts, however, was a different story. By all accounts, the members of the Arts and Letters Club spent the majority of their time discussing, debating, and engaging – often directly – in the many plays, readings, gallery openings, and musical performances that defined Club life. The Group of Seven were but the brightest lights among many to emerge during the early days of the Club, coming together following the First World War, at a time when at last, "the Club began again to look out hopefully on the world."[17] "Under the critical eyes of historiographic C. W.

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[14] Ibid, 12.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid, 13.
[17] Ibid, 19.

Jefferys; blustering, beauty-loving Bill Beatty," and a host of other luminaries, the Group found one another, setting upon a path that changed the nature of Canadian landscape art:

> A. Y. Jackson, up from the wilds of Quebec, tuned into the vibrations of apostolic, transitional Lawren Harris; grim-faced, Brahms-loving Varley from Yorkshire whose insight into a landscape was as keen as his diagnosis of a face; versatile Lismer whose left-hand cartoons of members and visitors were a joy to the Club and to pages of pungent personalities in the Big Book; Frank Johnston who was a chum of dynamic Nature in any topography; Carmichael whose colourcraft was one of the envies of colour-blind Heming, and – not in order of magnitude – Jim MacDonald who, when he did a monastic script or a backcover design or a Rocky Mountain poem, gave no symptom that he would ever join anything so iconoclastic as the Group of Seven.[18]

While their work quickly gained international acclaim, thanks in large part to the support of their well-connected peers, it was not smooth sailing for the Group at first. Their modernist, impressionistic depictions of the Canadian Wilds were out of synch with several of the Club's more conservative members. Among those partial to a more traditionalist approach to art, were George A. Reid, principal of the Central Ontario School of Art and Design [OCAD] from 1912-18, along with fellow painter E. Wyly Grier [1862-1957].[19] Adding a voice to these misgivings was Hector Charlesworth [1872-1945], writer for *Saturday Night* magazine, whose reviews of the Group were nearly as unsparing as those of fellow art critic H. F. Gadsby, who dubbed them the "Hot Mush School."[20] Echoing a larger rift that had begun with the Impressionists of the previous generation, the Group of Seven's early critics represented a small, yet determined subsection of the relatively open-minded Club.

"The Group of insurgents," as recalled by Bridle, the Group of Seven, "had grown up right in the Club where they got all the criticism that might be imagined from the most outspoken opinions in Canada against hierarchies and schools of thought, cliques of

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[18] Ibid, 20.
[19] Danielle Hamelin, "Toronto's Arts and Letters Club: A Public History Perspective," in *Thinkers and Dreamers: Historical Essays in Honour of Carl Berger*, eds., Gerald Friesen and Douglas Owram (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 150.
[20] Ibid.

painters and conspiracies of scrambled musicmakers."[21] At a time when many Club members considered the automobile to be a, "rather vulgar affliction of the *nouveaux riches*,"[22] Lawren Harris became the first artist-member to park his car conspicuously outside the Club.[23] Harris, heir to Massey-Harris dynasty, had against any early prejudices, proved to be an, "exuberantly democratic Radical," an individual of many talents who Bridle credits with introducing the Club to modern tastes, including improvisational non-jazz music, played on his personal, Sonara Phonograph. While Bridle admits that "the Club was 'from Missouri' on such things as 'canned music,' Cubism, Post-Impressionism, 'free-verse,' anti-baroque architecture, spasmodic modern drama – and most of the movies,"[24] he suggests that after the Great War, the Group of Seven came into their own, and in turn, helped bring the Club into the twentieth century.

While a "Bohemian democracy,"[25] was said to prevail in the face of the social norms of Edwardian Toronto, the resources and high-society connections brought to the Club by its wealthiest members were of great benefit to the many artists and craftspeople within it. Aside from Lawren Harris, who exhibited a mix of significant wealth and artistic talent, Vincent Massey, the other half of the Massey-Harris dynasty to call the Club home, quickly became one its most influential non-artist members. Vincent Massey joined the Club around the time of its transition from the old Court House to its permanent home at St. George's Hall on Elm St. in 1919. Following the Club's move,

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[21] Bridle, *Story of the Club*, 20.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] The Arts and Letters Club was known as a "Bohemian Club" right from the start, as evidenced from a December 19, 1911 letter by newcomer to Toronto Arthur Somers-Cocks (Lord Somers) to his sister Adeline Verena Ishbel Cocks (Lady Hyde) in England, describing the Club and his relationship with Eden Smith, who was to build him a country estate in Pickering.
Arthur Somers-Cocks, Lord Somers, Letter to Adeline Verena Ishbel Cocks, Lady Hyde. December 19, 1911. Personal collection of Lady Hyde. Reproduction found within the Arts and Letters Club Archives.

Massey was able to help secure the funds necessary to purchase and renovate St. George's Hall for the considerable sum of $60,000. Having declared that "the old Club is dead,"[26] reportedly "while laying on a settee at the fireplace,"[27] during one of Lawren Harris' renowned soirees at his Queen's Park mansion, Massey, and his fellow members made the decision to ensure that the Club would enjoy the benefits of a permanent address. Thus, the grandson of Hart Massey, financier of Toronto's Massey Hall, and future Governor General of Canada, added a perfect blend of theatricality and genuine love of the arts, assuming the role of Club spokesperson during and long after his term as Club President from 1920-21. Massey's membership sealed the transformation of the Club into an influential cornerstone of Toronto's social order and creative class.

With Massey came Hart House, and the Hart House Theatre, and with this new, public addition, came a parade of celebrity stage actors, directors, composers, musicians, orchestras, and numerous others, through the Club doors. Hart House was a collective effort, with Massey acting as unofficial architect and historicist in conjunction with hired hands and fellow Club members and prominent local architects, Sproatt & Rolph, with decorative calligraphy provided by Club member Scott Carter, who adorned the Great Hall with verses from John Milton's *Areopagiticia* at Massey's request.[28] Hart House is described as, "Massey's living museum of architecture, art, music and drama,"[29] the last of which – drama – being a focal point of the Hart House Theatre. Roy Mitchell [1884-1944], founding Club member and the Theatre's first artistic director, brought with him an avant-garde vision for modern stagecraft, as part of the new Little Theatre movement,

[26] Bridle, *Story of the Club*, 27.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, 50.
[29] Ibid.

which embraced small, community productions of modern plays, without the frivolity and melodrama that defined most popular theatre of the era. In many ways, the theatre and its dynamic first director were representative of the Club's collective proclivity towards pushing the boundaries of artistic expression. The addition of a well-attended public venue allowed the Club to expand its creative efforts into the public realm. More than this, Hart House also provided a stage upon which Club members could ply their trade, and share their talents alongside visiting performers and artists, and most important of all, to exploit their newfound social currency. MacDonald and Harris stepped in from time to time as set designers, musical compositions were provided by Club member and composer Healey Willan [1880-1968], and more than a few members, including Massey, tried their hand at acting, the Club's early live performances remembered fondly by all.[30]

Figure 4.3 *The Old Club* by J. E. Sampson [1887-1946], depicting several of the Arts and Letters Club's founding members, including Eden Smith (centre), who built the Club's storied stone fireplace (shown). Sampson was a notable Canadian artist and Club member, who would go on to co-found Colour-Craft Sampson-Matthews Limited.

[30] Ibid, 21-2.

In terms of the Club's architectural arm – the "A" in LAMPS – the Arts and Letters Club had among its ranks some of the best architects in Central Canada. Eden Smith, founding member, Arts and Crafts aficionado, and creator of the storied clubhouse fireplace,[31] worked to ingratiate himself into the Club's inner circle, a move made easier by the fact that he had built, or was in the process of building, a number of homes for several of the Club's most prominent members. Smith had already built homes for member and artist Gustav Hahn, in High Park, and had collaborated on at least one occasion with artist and architect George A. Reid, another Club member, in the construction of the W. H. Reid House that was built next to the Hahn House on Boustead Avenue. In 1914, Smith designed the Studio Building for members of the future Group of Seven in the Rosedale Ravine, the most modern building of Smith's career, featuring a rare departure from his English Cottage aesthetic. Beyond Eden Smith, the Club attracted a large number of equally talented Toronto architects, such as Henry Sproatt and Ernest Rolph [1871-1958], who were hired by Massey to design Hart House, in addition to the equally well-known W. A. Langton. Langton was a member of Smith's Architectural Eighteen Club, contributed regularly to the *CAB*, and later to *The Lamps*, and had long been established in Ontario as an early advocate of the City Beautiful movement to which he had been first introduced at the Chicago World's Fair.[32] Joined by common cause and association within the OAA, *CAB*, Eighteen Club, Arts and Letters Club, and *The Lamps*, to name but a few, the Club's architectural contingent was likely the most well-connected of all, their profession aligning them on many fronts.

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[31] W. A. Langton, "The Tendency of Our Architecture," *The Lamps* 1, no. 2 (December 1911): 7.
[32] Gilbert A. Stelter, "The City as a Work of Art," in *Urban Planning in a Changing World: The Twentieth Century Experience*, ed., Robert Freestone (London and New York: Routelegde, 2000), 104-5.

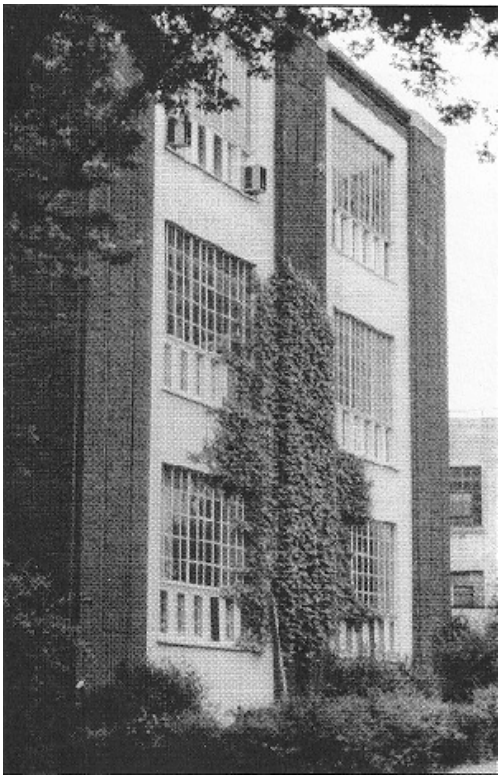

Figure 4.4 Studio Building [1914] in Toronto. Smith designed the Studio Building for the benefit of several of his artist friends and fellow Club members who went on to form the Group of Seven. Located in the Rosedale Ravine, the Studio Building was nestled amidst a natural, picturesque setting within easy access to the wealthy Rosedale neighbourhood that surrounded it. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003.

Taken as a whole, the roster of local architects that belonged to Arts and Letters Club from its inception to its 1920s heyday, highlights the extent to which the relationships formed as a central part of Club life were mutually beneficial. The Club created a space not only for discussion and creative output, but for the exchange of innovative ideas and artistic impulses, creating a collaborative atmosphere in which members were encouraged to push the limits of modern tastes and sensibilities. The early Club members worked diligently to maintain its Bohemian Democracy, while simultaneously pushing the artistic contingent of the Club to flourish and expand its horizons. Without them, the wealthy would have been merely a group of socialites, while the painters, playwrights, and architects among them would have – perhaps save for Harris – been left to fend for themselves. In short, this symbiosis was successful. Long

after many of its brother and sister organizations fell away, the Arts and Letters Club endured, to its centennial celebration and on to the present.

From the perspective of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, the Arts and Letters Club represented a microcosm experiment in complete design. The conceptual manifestation of the Club's multidisciplinary engagement with the arts – the LAMPS – harkened back to the idealized, medieval symbiosis of artistry and craftsmanship which had originally inspired William Morris. The Club truly represented "a gathering of the arts," as first envisioned around a dinner table at the St. Charles Inn. However, as much as the Club found a certain sense of pride and comfort in their creative cohesion and collective social aloofness, their Bohemian Democracy remained a direct reflection of the privilege and status enjoyed by its core members and their circle. The fact that it took but one chilly winter to disabuse them of the desire to "conform to the tradition of arts in poverty,"[33] and only a decade hence to see the Club through its relocation to the oak- and leather-bound comforts St. George's Hall, highlights the rapidity with which the Club came to express the elevated social standing of its core members. Beginning with their new headquarters, the Club quickly turned into something far removed from the egalitarian idealism they had once held as central to their cause.

Herein lies the most striking connection between the quickly evolving nature of the Arts and Letters Club to that of the Arts and Crafts Movement generally, that of the seemingly inevitable transformation from a pure, almost antiestablishment sensibility, towards – within the space of a generation – something far more mainstream. Just as artifice and mass production soon crept into the handbooks of countless Arts and Crafts-inspired workshops and factory floors, the arrival of every new automobile to the Club's

[33] Bridle, *Story of the Club*, 1.

doorstep, and every print sold by the Group of Seven, worked to erode the craft idealism and symbolic historic aestheticism which had once served as a guide. Neither the Arts and Letters Club, nor the Arts and Crafts Movement itself – in Canada, Britain, or elsewhere – were immune to the transformation from radical to routine, antiestablishment rebellion to mainstream success. In their search for authentic experiences, Club members could not ignore the allure of popularity, fame, and fortune, nor could they stifle the runaway success of the creative mediums they had long fought to foster, protect, and promote. For most of those involved in the actualization of Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement, the end goal was to bring their wares to market. The success of their aims, and their desire to elevate and awaken the consumer public to the benefits of selecting local over foreign, handmade over mass-produced, and authentic over artificial, was measured in direct proportion to the volume of units sold.

Furthermore, the Arts and Letters Club mimicked the distinctly gendered aspect of the male-dominated Arts and Crafts Movement. An exclusively male space up to the mid-1980s, the Club operated in the fashion of the day, an Old Boys' club for men to relax and while away the hours. Thus, an underlying masculinity and maleness presided over much of the internal club dialogue and creative process as it unfolded within the clubhouse walls, becoming a factor in every avenue of artistic expression to come from among its men-only membership. To these ends, the craft idealism and overtly masculine, medievalist aestheticism of the Arts and Crafts Movement mapped well onto the Club's membership, a phenomenon that was repeated over and over, whether within the OAA, *CAB*, Eighteen Club, or other such organizations that were almost all created from the start as highly masculine spaces. However, while it is true that in many ways the female

contingent of the Movement formed the minority, there were those, such as Mary-Etta McPherson, Associate Editor of *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, or Esther Marjorie Hill [1895-1985], who in 1920 became the first female graduate of the University of Toronto's School of Architecture, who worked to level the playing field.

Lastly, it cannot be forgotten the great extent to which the creative success of the Club's artistic contingent hinged upon the promotion, and eventual popularity and uptake of, their products by the general public – men *and* women included. Indeed, as suggested by the editors of *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, the purchasing power of housewives, and of women generally, was still highly concentrated in the domestic realm, even if the style or material aesthetic of the day had been produced to appeal to the male gaze. The widespread, continued success of their products depended upon the creation and nurturance of a reliable marketplace. Uniting the all male Arts and Letters Club – along with its ranks of artists, architects, and craftspeople – to the broader arts community, was the need to exhibit and promote their wares in an effort to bring to light their many perceived qualities and subsequent marketability. In this way, there was little between the operation of an organization such as the Arts and Letters Club to that of the similarly all male Group of Seven, mixed-company Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, or female-run Canadian Handicrafts Guild, to which this study shall now turn.

The Group of Seven

In the Spring of 1920, the Group of Seven debuted their work with an exhibition at the Toronto Art Gallery, an effort promoted by their peers within the Arts and Letters Club.[34] Introduced by the *Toronto Star* simply as, "a group of seven painters," the works

[34] Alexandra M. Roza, "Towards a Modern Canadian Art, 1910-1936: The Group of Seven, A.J.M. Smith and F.R. Scott," (MA thesis, McGill University, 1997), 45.

Figure 4.5 Group of Seven: First Exhibition [1920]. Held from May 7-27, 1920 at the Toronto Art Gallery (today the Art Gallery of Ontario), the Group of Seven's Toronto debut served to introduce their distinctive brand of heavily stylized, modern, impressionistic, nationalistic landscape art to Canadians. Photo courtesy the AGO.

of Varley, Carmichael, Jackson, MacDonald, Harris, Johnston, and Lismer, received high praise for their bold use of colour and simple, impressionistic style.[35] Of Varley, it was reported that the artist's portrait of Vincent Massey – by then Club President – which was to be displayed in the newly constructed Hart House, showcased an instinct for vitality, the subject, "full of character in the face and pose."[36] Carmichael's north country autumn views were described for their "brilliant passages of colour," while Jackson's winter scenes of Nova Scotia were said to evoke a "Japanesy effect," the artist's "little lumps of white clouds scurrying away and the late light touching vividly the green

[35] M. L. F., "Seven Painters Show Some Excellent Work," *The Toronto Star*, May 7, 1920, 3.
[36] Ibid.

shrubbery on the rocky foreground."[37] MacDonald garnered acclaim for his vivid garden scenes, described as, "a riot of color," while Harris' portrait of friend and fellow Club member Eden Smith, was reported to be a good characterization of the well-known architect.[38] Lastly, Johnson's ability to simplify the landscape, "to give a single impression" of the northern wilds, complete with the illusion of movement, was paired with praise for Lismer's East Coast logging scenes, so "full of color and sunlight."[39]

Figure 4.6 *Fire-Swept, Algoma* [1920] by Frank Johnston. One of several works included in the Group of Seven's debut exhibition, Johnston's elegant depiction of the raw beauty of the Canadian Wilds came to define he and the others' ability to tap into the innate emotionality of nature. Courtesy the National Gallery

Despite this early praise, the Group of Seven had their fair share of critics, especially among the art world, where their unique brand of modernist, nationalist, landscape art faced some of its strongest rebukes. From the outset, as quoted by art historian Peter Mellen, the Group invited – thrived even – on criticism, the introductory material for their first exhibition, written by Harris, predicting that their "distinctive and vital'" art would be met with "ridicule and indifference," and would likely, at least at

[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

first, only resonate with "a very small group of intelligent individuals."[40] From these, came a mix of reverence and ridicule, the most formidable example of the latter hailing from fellow Club member, art critic, and *Saturday Night* editor, the aforementioned Hector Charlesworth.[41] Between 1922 and 1924, as the Group's rise to stardom took off, Charlesworth's poor esteem of their work and all they stood for as artists culminated in a series of scathing reviews in *Saturday Night*.[42] In 1922, Charlesworth launched the first of his attacks, spurred on by the National Gallery's recent acquisition of a sizeable collection of the Group's, "experimental" art, to the supposed neglect and detriment of more "worthy" Canadian artists.[43] Charlesworth refused to validate the artistic merit of the Group's work, and lamented any scenario in which the National Gallery's "apparent obsession in favour of one school of Canadian painting" could be allowed to "destroy... the individuality of young artists."[44] To this, as was custom for the Group, Jackson offered a sarcastic rebuttal, wryly suggesting that for his next act, Charlesworth might rid the Metropolitan Museum of Art of "fake stuff by Cezanne, Rockwell, Kent, Pendergast, and other experimental painters which he could shove down into the cellar."[45]

Typical of this early period in the Group of Seven's rise to fame, critiques of their work generally fell into two distinct, yet often related categories. The first centred upon critiques of the art itself – of its unabashed modernism, heavy use of thick oil paint, and of its sharp break from more conventional artistic practices and traditions. This however, was generally paired with, or at times eclipsed by the second – comprised of critiques of

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[40] Peter Mellen, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970), 216.
[41] Roza, "Towards a Modern Canadian Art," 48.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Hector Charlesworth, "National Gallery a National Reproach," *Saturday Night*, December 9, 1922, 3.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.

what the art represented, and of the Group's supposed designation as the new face of Canadian art, nationhood, national pride, and identity. To the first point, as Bridle and others have commented, the art world quickly caught up to the modernism inherent in the Group 's unique style, as public exposure and gradual acceptance of futurism, cubism, surrealism, and other post-impressionistic *isms* overtook the traditional popularity of the European Grand Masters. To paraphrase Bridle et al, the Group eventually, due in large part to its widespread popularity and acceptance, became "old hat." On the notion, taken up by Charlesworth and others, that the Canadian School of Art was being unfairly monopolized, it is somewhat more difficult to comment, the popularity of one artist or art form over another nearly impossible to track. Nevertheless, within the space of two years, the Group had been catapulted – through both its own tireless promotional efforts, and by way of its quick-spreading mass appeal and acclaim for their emotive, nationalistic landscape art – to the forefront of the nascent Canadian art world. It would only be a matter of time, upon the occasion of the Group's international debut at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition in London, that wider audiences would come to know them by name.

Over the summer seasons of 1924 and 1925, the 220-acre British Empire Exhibition took in 25 million visitors, thereby becoming one of the largest of its kind to be held during the golden age of World Fairs as begun in the nineteenth century.[46] Opened on April 23, 1924, with a ceremony and speech by King George V, which concluded with the King sending a telegraph to himself around the world live before a crowd of 100 thousand people, the Exhibition was as much an exercise in nationalistic

[46] Anne Clendinning, "Exhibiting a Nation: Canada at the British Empire Exhibition, 1924-1925." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 39, no. 77 (2006): 80.

pomp as it was a celebration of human innovation and creativity.[47] Beyond the popular highlights of the Exhibition, including the magnificent grounds, amusement park rides, and carnival games, the pavilions of Industry, Agriculture, and Arts, along with those of each of the fifty-eight participant Commonwealth nations, were the stars of the show. Among the international pavilions, Canada's was the best attended and remembered, the impressive displays, in tandem with Canada's significant presence within the Palace of Arts, combined to ensure that the nation's heavily-sponsored investment into the Exhibition was worth its while. Backed in part by Canadian National [CN] and Canadian Pacific Railway [CPR], Canada's numerous industrial, and cultural contributions were selected to showcase the nation's best assets. Displays of Canada's rich resources, innovative spirit, and natural beauty were accompanied, in the building over, by wall after wall filled with modernist oil paintings and watercolours of the very same.

The Canadian showing at the Exhibition, though it had been designed to depict a unified national identity, came together out of an amalgam of loosely related ideals and characterizations, which according to historian Anne Clendennig, resulted in displays depicting "a country that was the granary of the Empire, but also the future workshop of the world; a land of untamed wilderness, and one of sophisticated modern cities."[48] Despite the potential for mixed messages, both the displays and Canadian response to them, recorded by the hundreds in a series of guest books left in the exhibition halls, revealed a collective Canadian feeling of national pride intermingled with a well-established loyalty for Canada's British heritage.[49] Less than five years since Canada had proven itself in the Great War, and claimed its own seat at the League of Nations, it is not

[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid, 82.
[49] Ibid.

difficult to imagine the national pride which most Canadians would have felt while taking in the nation's magnificent displays. The final curtain call for what Alexandra Mosquin

Figure 4.7 "Canada," Palace of Arts [1924]. Canada's impressive showing at the Exhibition was the result of years of planning, the costly endeavour serving to place the relatively young nation, and its fine assortment of goods both practical and cultural, onto the world stage. Photo courtesy Art Canada Institute.

refers to as the type of Victorian museum display that was typical of the day, the self-promotional embarrassment of riches that was the Canadian effort at the British Empire Exhibition anticipated Innis' Staple Thesis by more than half a decade.[50] Self-promotional in equal measure to its own self awareness, there was a calculated method behind the organized chaos that exemplified the Canadian showing. Cautious not to promote Canadian economic interests to the detriment of exhibiting the nation's cultural prowess, the separation of Canada's industrial and agricultural displays from its artistic offerings was carefully curated to tell the same story albeit in two subtly different ways.

Beyond the well-received butter rendering of the Prince of Wales, and triumphant tractor pulls, it was the art of the Group of Seven whose sizeable display made the loudest cultural statement about who Canadians were, and how they viewed their country. In their vibrant depictions of the Canadian wilderness, and bold technical style, the

[50] Alexandra M. Mosquin, "Advertising Canada Abroad: Canada on Display at International Exhibitions, 1920-1940" (PhD diss., York University, 2003), 23-6.

Group, amid a handful of others, made a clear visual representation of what might be meant by the notion of a uniquely *Canadian* national identity. From an artistic, cultural

Figure 4.8 *The Jack Pine* [1917] by Tom Thomson. Though Thomson's mysterious death in 1917 barred him entry into the Group of Seven in 1920, his past relationship with the Group, and his sizeable impact on its artistic direction prior to its formation, has long saved a place for the artist as an honourary member. To this end, several of the late artist's most famous works, including this one, were included among those put forward by the Group during the Exhibition. Courtesy the National Gallery of Canada.

standpoint, the Group were tantamount, according to Leonard Richmond [1889-1965], artist and editor for *The Studio*, a British Arts and Crafts-focused periodical, to having become "pioneers of art in their own country," which despite its hint of European influences, "prove[d] the existence of a national school of painting."[51] Richmond's review, brimming with praise for the "enterprising little band of painters"[52] from Canada, highlights the Group's ability to "strip nature of all superficial trimmings (such as pretty leaves or elegantly coloured water) showing only the bed-rock truth of the subject with a Zola-like appreciation of naked reality."[53] It was this sense of free-flowing detachment, both for aesthetic details and for the artistic conventions of the day, along with the

[51] Leonard Richmond, R.O.I., "Canadian Art at Wembley." *The Studio* 89, no. 382 (January 1925): 16.
[52] Ibid, 19.
[53] Ibid.

Group's unique way of seeing and capturing the beauty and vulnerability of the Canadian wilds, which succeeded in introducing the world to Canada's modern cultural awakening.

While the Canadian contribution to the Palace of Arts was highly regarded, it is impossible to reflect upon the artistic contingent of the Canadian showing without fully considering the context of its purpose and placement. Entered alongside the nation's top names in technology, agriculture, and tourism, the latter's recent boom owing much to key sponsors CN and CPR, the decision to showcase such a sizeable, hand-picked collection of the Group of Seven's boldly modernist images of the Canadian landscape was not made lightly. Over the objections of several members of the Royal Academy of Canadian Art, the Group's work, viewed by some critics as being too unabashedly modern, was favoured by the selection committee to such a degree that it dominated the Canadian showing within the Palace of Arts.[54] This example of cultural selection highlights the reverence with which the Group had already come to be seen, only a few years after their 1920 debut in Toronto. The Group's modernist depictions of Canada's wild, bountiful, untamed beauty, alongside the displays of steam engines, combine harvesters, and automobiles, presents a picture of what the display organizers saw as putting the best view of Canada forward, one which became all the more clear once tourism was added to the mix. While the Group would not likely have been comfortable with their work being so co-opted, it can be argued that the way in which it was deployed had a commercial bent to it, one not wholly dissimilar to the realm of corporate graphic art from which several of them had achieved significant professional success.

Although it may be too cynical to suggest that the Group of Seven's pleasing depictions of the Canadian wilderness were employed for commercial, promotional

[54] Clendinning, "Exhibiting a Nation," 80.

purposes, their artwork commandeered as free advertising in the guise of international exposure and recognition, it is difficult to ignore this as a possibility. By the time of the British Empire Exhibition, Canada had already come to understand the value of world's fairs, as evidenced by the Macdonald Government's precedent-setting $300,000 expenditure for the Colonial and India Exhibition of 1886, followed by Laurier's establishment of the Canadian Government Exhibition Commission in 1901.[55] The Exhibition Commission was provided a permanent staff, which was led primarily by Canada's political, cultural, and social elites, their collective aspirations and vision for the nation to hold significant sway in virtually all matters of cultural selection, promotion and display.[56] Donald Smith [1820-1914], titled Lord Strathcona, High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 1896 to 1914, and perhaps best known as a wealthy railway magnate, was a key figure during the early days of the Commission, and held a high degree of influence over any decisions to do with Canadian participation in international events and exhibitions.[57] Thus imbued with a decidedly British-centric world view, and backed by a circle of the nation's elite, one that ostensibly championed imperialism, capitalism, technological innovation, and an Anglo-Canadian sensibility, the wheels were already in motion for the showing as it transpired at Wembley.

The Group of Seven's self-promotion, backed by their wealth of connections within the Arts and Letters Club, and legitimized by their artistic talent, were able to capitalize upon Canada's bountiful natural splendour, and thereby cement their place at the Palace of Arts well before the Exhibition had been announced. While the Commission's selection process was grinding on behind closed doors in the years running

[55] Ibid, 85.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.

up to the Exhibition, the Group's art and cultural capital was rapidly rising in critical – and most importantly, popular – acclaim. Over the course of Massey's presidency at the Arts and Letters Club, the Group had become an overnight cultural phenomenon within Canada, their works gracing the mantles and personal collections of Canada's cultural elite and growing middle class. Culturally intertwined with the artistic sensibilities shared by many within the Club – namely, an affinity for the Craft Movement, for nature, and that "English something" that was said by Nobbs to bind the country together – the Canadian showing at Wembley represented the forefront of modern Anglo-Canadian expression, identity, and popular taste. The Group's transition to cultural trademark, their work a sort of commodified Canadiana to be displayed lifeless and out of context alongside the steam engines, harvesters, and precious metals that made up the rest of the Canadian display, made its transformation complete. Whether they liked it or not, the Group of Seven had been enlisted as both artists and ad-men for the Dominion.

By the end of the Exhibition, the Group of Seven had become international cultural celebrities. Millions of people had marvelled at their collection in the Palace of Arts, esteemed art critics had penned glowing reviews, and the Tate Gallery in London had purchased a handful of pieces for permanent display. Back home after the show, the Group's artwork rose to new heights of popularity, the production of prints increasing to new levels, reproductions of their work becoming decorative fixtures within fashionable middle-class homes across the country. Despite what the purists among either the Arts and Letters Club, or within the Group of Seven itself, would have felt about the latter's mass exposure and commercial popularity, the success of the Group's showing at the British Empire Exhibition was one shared with the larger Canadian Arts and Crafts

Movement. Linked by a mutual appreciation of natural beauty and its organic, material aesthetic, and unified in their belief in the power of a simple, elegant modernity as expressed as an essential element in their work, the Group had much in common with their fellow artists, craftspeople, and architects within the Movement. For every Harris or Carmichael hung above a mantle, there was a need for an appropriate setting in which to display such a piece of modern, Canadian art – the Arts and Crafts home, with its earthy palette, natural materials, and traditional craftsmanship, providing just such a venue.

An accessory of fashionable home decor in Canada, the Group's art quickly became a signifier of modern domestic taste. By 1930, their work had become so ubiquitous among Canadian households, that *Canadian Homes and Gardens* once quipped about the "confessed weakness for the art of the Group of Seven"[58] said to be shared by middle-class housewives, its status as a well-worn marker of a cultured taste having become a target of parody. Nearly a century later, during the fieldwork portion of this study, it was not at all uncommon to find the odd Group of Seven print poised conspicuously over one's mantle, dining room, or inglenook fireplace. In essence, the Group's success bred demand for the lucrative business of mechanical reproduction. Thus, just as the demand for handmade furniture fuelled the machines of mass-production, and the popularity of bespoke homes drove the rise of the kit house industry, so did modern printmaking allow for the beauty of the Canadian Wilds to grace the parlours and sitting rooms of countless bungalows and cottages across the country.

[58] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930), 48.

The Arts and Crafts Society of Canada

"The arts have always had periods of rise and decline," begins the preamble to the *Constitution and by-laws of the Society of Arts and Crafts of Canada*:[59]

> ...to the marked decline which occurred early in the present century [which] is said to have been caused by the application of steam-power to machinery; the great ease of production causing the excessive use of ornamentation. A movement set in characterized by a return to simplicity of design, appropriate ornament, and the substitution of hand-work for machine-work wherever it was possible. A small band of workers, headed by William Morris, led the revival, which spread from England to the Continent and finally to our own country. This widespread interest in applied art has caused an activity which has sometimes resulted in extravagance, but which, on the whole, has been productive of great improvement in all manufactured articles.[60]

Reading similar to the early Morris-inspired Arts and Crafts literature of the late nineteenth century, and echoing the sentiments put forth in Canada by Eden Smith – a member of the Society's executive committee – the preamble covers the key themes known to artists and craftspeople across Britain, the United States, and Canada. Everything from the deleterious effects of mass-production and subsequent over-ornamentation, to the optimistic reversal of fortunes inspired by Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, is brought to bear in just a few brief lines, setting the tone for the Society and its mandate. "From England to the Continent and finally to our own country," the Craft ideal had wended its way through the artistic circles of Britain and Europe before finding a new home in Canada. Its call for a "return to simplicity of design, appropriate ornament, and the substitution of hand-work for machine-work wherever it was possible," was thereby hoped to spur in its adoptive nation a "great improvement in all manufactured articles."[61] It was thus up to the Society to carry

[59] "Constitution and by-laws of the Society of Arts and Crafts of Canada," (Toronto: The Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, 1902), 2.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.

forward Morris' ideas, and to assume the role of standard bearer for the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement through exhibitions, gallery showings, and public promotion.

To these ends, *Article II* of the *Constitution* lays out the "object of the 'Society of Arts and Crafts of Canada' [as] the encouragement of original design and its individual expression, to promote this object by holding Exhibitions of original, Canadian work."[62] Furthermore, the Society made clear its desire to promote the artist in conjunction with their work, to ensure "the names of the designer and executant [are] always given," and to back this effort by making available to all interested in the "subject of handicraft," a regular program of lectures, literature, and loan exhibits.[63] The Society of Arts and Crafts of Canada, commonly referred to as the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, operated in similar fashion to the Arts and Letters Club, Ontario Society of Artists, Ontario Association of Architects, Eighteen Club, and Canadian Handicrafts Guild, providing its members with a platform and support network for promoting their work to the public. With members hailing from across the spectrum of creative professionals active in Toronto, Ontario, and elsewhere, including artists, craftspeople, architects, and a great number of wealthy patrons, many within the Society belonged to the same private clubs and professional organizations as their colleagues. The fate of the Craft ideal was thus left in the hands of the nation's most accomplished artists, craftspeople, and socialites.

Tying the Society to the Arts and Letters Club, the latter having been formed six years after the former, Eden Smith, a founding member of both, was joined by future Club members and fellow artists George A. Reid, Gustav Hahn, George A. Howell, and E. Wyly Grier [1862-1957], along with Edward R. Greig, future curator of the Art

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[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.

Gallery of Toronto.[64] For Smith, the Society, like the Club, represented an opportunity to further ingratiate himself among Toronto's cultural elite, highlighted by his having designed homes for no less than eight prominent members of the Society. This was a pattern repeated by he and several of his similarly well-connected architectural colleagues. A detailed search through the membership of either organization, cross-referenced against the publicly available records for homes built in Toronto during the early twentieth century, reveal that a small collection of Arts and Crafts-inspired architects designed a vast number of homes for the city's elite.[65] Furthermore, not only did the homes of Toronto's creative class largely hail from the sketchbooks of those affiliated with the Arts and Crafts Movement, but from architects such as Henry Sproatt, Ernest Rolph, J. C. B Horwood [1864-1938], C. H. Acton Bond [1869-1924], and Alfred H. Chapman [1878-1949], all members of Smith's Eighteen Club.[66] It was enriched as well by its connections to Toronto's arts scene, through members such as Edward R. Greig, who along with Vincent Massey and Robert Young Eaton [1875-1956], would go on to run the Art Gallery of Toronto during the Group of Seven's heyday.

Connections aside, a cursory glance at the 130 names on the Society's mixed-company membership roster, including president Mrs. Agar Adamson [1871-1943], whose husband was a founding members of the Arts and Letters Club, reveals that beyond the well-known male artists that filled its ranks, there existed a ratio of women to men of approximately five to one.[67] Numbering only twenty or so, the male membership

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[64] Ibid, 5.
[65] Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950. Found online at: http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1322
[66] Kelly Crossman, *Architecture in Transition: From Art to Practice, 1885-1906* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 166.
[67] Ibid.

was vastly outweighed by its female counterpart. The Society was made up of numerous married couples, along with a great number of married and unmarried women, many of whom were highly accomplished artists and craftspeople. Beginning with president Adamson (née Mabel Cawthra), who as a young woman and wealthy heiress to the Cawthra fortune, had studied at Charles Ashbee's Guild of Handicrafts in England, was well-known as a highly skilled painter, interior designer, metalworker, enameller, and businesswoman.[68] Owner of the Toronto branch of the English interior design firm, the W. & E. Thornton-Smith Company, which sold high-end furniture and home decor, Mrs. Adamson was successful regardless of her family ties, winning numerous interior decorating contracts with several Toronto-area theatres and churches.[69] Additionally invested as a friend and affiliated associate of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild as begun in Montreal in 1906, Mrs. Adamson was well-rooted within the broader scope of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.[70] Wealthy, well-connected, and English-educated and trained in the core disciplines of the Arts and Crafts, Mrs. Adamson was the perfect choice for the role of the Society's first president and head of the executive committee.

The renowned artist George A. Reid, instructor at the Ontario College of Art and Design [OCAD], and founding member of both the Arts and Letters Club and Art Gallery of Toronto, served under Adamson as vice-president, joining the executive committee with his wife Mrs G. A. Reid (née Mary Hiester) [1854-1921]. Known early on in her career for her skill with floral paintings, the American-born Mrs. Reid became one of the

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[68] "Adamson, Mrs. Agar (Mabel Cawthra)," *Artist Database*. Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, August, 2017, https://cwahi.concordia.ca/sources/artists/displayArtist.php?ID_artist=270

[69] Ibid.

[70] Ellen McLeod, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 107.

first women in Canada to have her art included in the National Gallery of Canada, her work going on to gather international acclaim at the Palace of Fine Arts at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.[71] Residents of Toronto since 1885, the Reids lived first on Indian Road in High Park alongside several fellow artists and architects, including Gustav Hahn and Eden Smith - who designed the Hahn House, and had Mr. Reid help adorn the mantle of the home he built next door – and then moved along with their neighbours to Wychwood Park where Mr. Reid designed and built an Arts and Crafts style home for he and his family.[72] Together, George and Mary Reid were a major force within Toronto's arts scene, their work displayed at numerous gallery showings and exhibitions from the 1880s to Mary's death in 1921. In a nod to Mary's contribution to Canadian art, the Art Gallery of Toronto held a comprehensive retrospective of her work the following year, featuring an impressive showcase including over 300 pieces.[73]

Furthering the familiarity among members of the Society and the broader arts community, English-Canadian landscape artist Mary E. Wrinch [1877-1969], was also listed as one of the original members, George Reid's former student and second wife [1923], recorded to have been one of the late Mary Reid's closest friends.[74] A member, along with George and Mary Reid, within the Ontario Society of Artists, and Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, Mary Wrinch was also a member of the Canadian

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[71] "Reid, Mary Hiester," *Artist Database*. Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, October, 2017, http://cwahi.concordia.ca/sources/artists/displayArtist.php?ID_artist=59
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.
[74] "Biographical sketch," *Description & Finding Aid: George Agnew Reid Fond, CA OTAG SC010*, Art Gallery of Ontario: E. P. Taylor Research Library and Archives, 2013, 2, https://www.ago.net/assets/files/pdf/special_collections/SC010.pdf

Handicrafts Guild to which Society President Mrs. Adamson was similarly affiliated.[75] A decade prior to her marriage to George Reid, Mary and her sister Marion Agnes Wrinch are listed as owners of a 1911-built Eden Smith home on Alcina Avenue in Wychwood Park, placing them in close contact with the many artists and architects who resided there at the time.[76] With this mix of close friendships and intimate relationships across several organizations, the Canadian arts community was extremely close-knit.

Moreover, closer examination of the Society's executive committee and list of regular members reveals a collection of industrious, entrepreneurial artists and craftspeople. Among them were craftswomen like Grace Helen Mowat [1875-1964], of New Brunswick, a teacher at the Hailfax Ladies College from 1901 to 1905, whose interest in traditional cottage industries led her to become the founder of the Cottage Craft studio and shop in 1913, with showings as far abroad as the British Empire Exhibition of 1924.[77] A prolific author later in life, Mowat wrote several books about traditional crafts and the Maritimes, in addition to founding the female-oriented Music, Art, and Drama Society in 1934, her dedication to the arts recognised with an honourary doctorate from the University of New Brunswick in 1951.[78] Another prominent Society member, Emily Louise Orr Elliott [1867-1952], was a successful graphic artist for Eaton's and Simpson's, a correspondent for the *Toronto Star*, a musical composer,

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[75] "Wrinch, Mary E.," *Artist Database*. Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, August, 2013, http://cwahi.concordia.ca/sources/artists/displayArtist.php?ID_artist=110
[76] "Smith, Eden," *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950*, http://dictionaryofarchitectsincanada.org/node/1310
[77] "Mowat, Grace Helen," *Artist Database*. Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, July, 2012, https://cwahi.concordia.ca/sources/artists/displayArtist.php?ID_artist=5542
[78] Ibid.

lecturer in the arts, and acclaimed painter.[79] A founding chair of the Women's Committee of the Canadian National Exhibition, Orr was instrumental in the design and construction of the Women's Building, completed in 1912[80] These women, along with the rest of the mixed-company membership of the Society, drew inspiration and support from their peers here and across the gamut of cultural associations that arose in Canada at this time. By comparison, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild stands as the only association to have rivalled the amassing of female talent and creative output as achieved by the Society.

The Canadian Handicrafts Guild

In 1905, after nearly a decade of planning small craft exhibitions, growing a membership base, and seeking the support of their wealthy Canadian peers, including the Governor General, Alice Peck [1855-1943] and May Phillips [1856-1937] co-founded the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Born into wealth, and well-connected owing to her marriage to industrialist James Peck, Mary Alice Skelton was part of a small but highly influential group of Anglo-Canadian Montrealers.[81] Mary Martha (May) Phillips, an accomplished artist and principal of the School of Art and Applied Design in Montreal, was the daughter of a prominent doctor, and thus ran in the same social circles as her lifelong friend and co-founder of the Guild, Alice Peck.[82] Using their connections, Peck and Phillips had built up a following among their female peers, having organized numerous craft fairs and exhibits since the mid 1890s, as founding members of the Montreal branch of the Women's Art Association of Canada. Frustrated, however, by the limitations

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[79] "Elliott, Emily Louise Orr," *Artist Database*. Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, QC, April, 2016, https://cwahi.concordia.ca/fr/sources/artists/displayArtist.php?ID_artist=5848
[80] Ibid.
[81] McLeod, *In Good Hands*, 13;17.
[82] Ibid, 25-6.

imposed upon women in terms of their lack of access to the majority of private clubs and professional organizations then in existence, and desirous of carving out a space for women to learn and profit from the creation, preservation, and promotion of traditional handicrafts, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild was brought into being.[83] Equipped with a platform to educate, train, and impart specialized skills to their majority female membership, the Guild was conceptualized from the start as a force for moral and social good, giving women the tools necessary to seek economic independence and upward mobility through the industrious pursuit of traditional handicraft.

Figure 4.9 From left to right, life-long friends and co-founders of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, May Phillips [1901] and Alice Peck [1894], harnessed their entrepreneurial energies and high-society connections into the creation of one of the longest-enduring craft organizations in Canada. Both images courtesy of the McCord Museum

In many ways, the Guild can be viewed as the Canadian answer to Chicago's Hull House, another organization with a strong craft idealism run by the equally ambitious Jane Addams [1860-1935] and Ellen Gates Starr [1859-1940]. Similar to Hull House, the Guild sought to reach out to the working class, including many new immigrants, with an

[83] Ibid, 4-5.

aim towards educating and providing them with practical skills, primarily as a way to assimilate them into American society. Where the objectives of the Guild differed from Hull House, rests in the former's significantly larger concern with the preservation of craft ideals and cultural identity through handicrafts.[84] Unlike the Hull House model of practical education, with its dual aims of external employment and the instillation of middle-class values,[85] the Guild sought to educate its members in the cultural significance and practical traditions of the arts and crafts of many different cultures. The Guild differed as well, in that instead of educating its members, pushing them out into the workforce, and moving on, its worker-members were retained indefinitely. In this way, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild operated more or less in line with a handful of similar institutions which were part of the larger settlement house movement that was active in the United States and Canada, which historians Margaret Gillet and Sarah Burke discuss in their respective studies on the history of such institutions in Montreal[86] and Toronto.[87] The Guild went to great lengths and expense to organize craft exhibitions, and were represented at major fairs and exhibitions nationally and abroad. Furthermore, the decision to make membership a more long-term, supportive effort, fostered a more holistic, positive approach to cottage industries, as opposed to that experienced at Hull House, which sought to use educational programs as a method to "correct" poor attitudes towards manual labour. Comfortable with the gentler aspects of socialism, yet grounded

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[84] *Constitution and By-Laws of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild* (Montreal: Canadian Handicrafts Guild, 1906), 3.
[85] Eleanor J. Stebner, *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 13.
[86] Margaret Gillet, *We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill* (Montreal: Eden Press Women's Publications, 1981).
[87] Sara Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

in the principles of hard work and the end goal of getting a product to market, the Guild was thus better aligned with the craft idealism and pro-labour views of William Morris.

The *Constitution and By-Laws of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild*, published in 1906, lays out the articles and thus the aims and goals of the organization, its contents providing a fascinating look into the principles behind the founders' vision. *Article I* stipulates that, "the work of the Guild shall be carried out on philanthropic principles [and that] the [executive and other non-worker] members of the Guild shall not make any personal profit from its affairs."[88] *Article II* lists the Guild's main objectives:

> (a) To revive, retain, encourage and develop the handicrafts and art industries throughout the Dominion of Canada
> (b) To prevent the loss of knowledge of any arts or crafts, possessed by new settlers, and by giving them a market for good handwork to aid them during the difficult early stages of settlement.
> (c) By retaining the said crafts and art industries to give the individuals or communities practising them, an added means of support, so increasing their contentment and well-being, and at the same time enriching the Dominion.
> (d) To open up markets for Canadian handicrafts in the Dominion and abroad, and for this purpose to establish a depot, or depots for the sale of goods.
> (e) To educate the public to the value of good hand-work by means of exhibition and as otherwise deemed advisable.
> (f) To send out among the workers, where and when necessary teachers and supervisors to keep up the standard of excellence.
> (g) To record patterns, stitches, dyes and recipes and all such information as may appear of value in carrying out the aims of the Guild.
> (h) When conditions are found favourable for the development of a certain craft to establish schools or workshops for this purpose.[89]

Article III is concerned with membership, beginning with the Guild's stated desire to be placed under the patronage of the Governor General, as well as, "one or more ladies of his household."[90] Membership into the Guild was designed to be affordable. For only a dollar per year, members were allowed to join and thereby vote at the annual meeting.[91] For five dollars per year, members were eligible for approval by the committee to run for

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[88] *Constitution and By-Laws*, 3.
[89] Ibid, 3-4.
[90] Ibid, 4.
[91] Ibid.

council.[92] Lifetime membership, which included all of the privileges of the association, was set at fifty dollars,[93] thus requiring a significantly higher level of commitment to the ongoing affairs of the Guild. The remaining articles and by-laws dealt with the organizational details of leadership, voting procedures, and the stratification of power.

Philanthropic by design, the Guild was one of the many Progressive-Era organizations, begun in both the United States and Canada, created to serve the interests of the public. Run by powerful, highly-skilled women of notable social status, the Guild fit in among other associations headed by women such as the WCTU and the YWCA. In its dedication to preserving and promoting the arts and crafts of Canada and of the diverse craft traditions of those recently arrived from abroad, the Guild stood out for its labour- and production-directed focus. The educational aims of the Guild are significant as well to consider. The stated desire to educate both the artisans and the consumer public about the cultural significance of arts and crafts traditions and practices, with the end goal of creating a viable domestic and foreign market for Canadian-made wares, was a noble and ambitious undertaking. However, the implicit cultural selection that would have been a part of this process of skill preservation, education, and promotion, raises the question of what was labelled as *good* or *valuable* craft, and by inference, what was left aside? Even though such a selection process was inevitable given what would have been an overwhelming array of examples to choose from, entrenched cultural biases resulted in certain aspects of traditional handicrafts being left out, lost to fade into obscurity.

One of the most interesting inclusions in the *Constitution*, is the stated desire that the Guild be placed under the patronage of the Governor General, and more specifically,

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[92] Ibid, 5.
[93] Ibid.

of any "ladies of his household."[94] For the female founders of the association, although their social status and elite connections opened many doors, they remained at least partially constrained by the heavily patriarchal norms of their day, the patronage of the Governor General likely understood as affording the Guild an added degree of officialdom. However, considering the extent to which Lady Aberdeen, the previous Governor General's wife, was early on involved in Guild affairs, it is equally as likely that beyond the current Governor General's patronage, it may well have been the favour of his wife, Countess Grey, which the Guild sought most. Similar thus in many respects to the efficacy of social networking within the Arts and Letters Club and the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, many members of the Guild were connected to numerous other private and professional associations, including the mixed-company Society, which shared a handful of members hailing from Ontario, Quebec, and elsewhere.

In 1909, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild hosted two special guests, the Countess of Aberdeen, a wealthy patron of the arts with long-running ties to the Guild and its founders, along with the Delegates to the International Council of Women. The conference took place at the Art Gallery of Montreal, and was begun by an address by Guild president Alice Peck. The address provides several interesting details, including those of the association's early history, from the decision to abandon what the founders perceived to be a cultureless Toronto in the 1890's in favour of the more artistically minded Montreal, to its official sanctioning and founding in 1905-6[95] Peck highlighted the international success of the Guild, and its numerous craft exhibits in Canada, the

[94] Ibid, 3-4.
[95] Alice Peck, "Address at the Reception given by The Canadian Handicrafts Guild to The Countess of Aberdeen and the Delegates to the International Council of Women" (Montreal: Canadian Handicrafts Guild, June 14, 1909), 2.

United States, Britain, and Australia. On the topic of the Australian exhibition, Peck proudly stated that although the effort cost a hefty sum of twelve hundred dollars, "being a strongly imperialistic guild, we were glad to feel that even in our humble way we might add one little link to the chain that binds empire together."[96] The Guild was constantly balancing a fine line between an open, progressive mandate in terms of its foundational embrace of foreign cultures and what could be labelled a feminist outlook, while never straying too far from an imperialistic, patriotic, and ostensibly patriarchal, public front.

The Guild worked hard at being a democratic institution with a strong focus upon the preservation of craft traditions, both local and foreign. Enlightenment through education was seen as the best path towards meeting these goals, the revenue and exposure garnered by their presence at craft fairs and expos around the world, making the Guild a financially viable organization that unlike most of its counterparts, has survived to this day. The character of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement is reflected in many ways by its strong democratic-socialist leanings and culturally sensitive craft ideals. There is also a hint of what could be called "Canadian Exceptionalism" evident in Peck's 1909 President's Address, citing – in language evocative of Turner's *Frontier Thesis* – the unique challenges of having many cultures spread over a vast geographic landscape:

> There [Great Britain and Europe], a Society deals with people of one language, with, for the most part, one religion, and with established standards, ideals, and conditions, and within an area measured by hundreds of miles. Here we must deal with peoples of many tongues, and many religions, with different standards and ideals, with conditions that change constantly, and over an area covering thousands and thousands of miles.[97]

Hence, in the view of the Guild, the arts and crafts of a nation or people were seen to represent a physical manifestation of national identity and pride, Peck's President's Address awarding high praise to the craftspeople of the world in recognition of the

[96] Ibid, 5.
[97] Ibid, 6.

architectural beauty of Europe and the colourful glory of East Asia.[98] It was the craftspeople of the world, according to Peck, who made their homelands known internationally, Persian rugs, Irish lace, and German clocks, being but only a few examples of the craft-nationality associations for which global cultures were celebrated.[99] Given the central importance of a national craft tradition, industry, and identity, it is reiterated throughout the Address that one of the main goals of the Guild was to preserve the traditional ways of craftsmanship that had all but become a lost art.

Thus, despite engaging in what today what could be labelled as salvage anthropology, the Guild's recorded mandate to seek out, promote, and in many cases preserve the craft traditions of cultures both foreign and domestic signalled an underlying desire to enrich, or at the very least augment, the breadth of Canada's craft traditions. For though the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement possessed a distinctively Anglo-centric national identity and character, flavoured, if only sparingly, by an idealized French-Canadian historicism, the efforts of the Guild to bring a multi-cultural element into the fold of Canadian craftwork cannot be ignored. To these ends, the efforts of missionary, intellectual, and friend of the Guild, Dr. Grenfell, whose expeditions into the Inuit communities of northern Labrador are documented in the Guild's *Shop Pamphlet* of 1908, provide a prime example of the organization's efforts, flawed as they may have been, to preserve the Indigenous crafts of Canada. Financed in part by the Guild, Dr. Grenfell was put to the task of locating and extracting the ancient craft traditions of the nation's remaining, remote societies of Indigenous peoples. The Guild was among the first to recognize the inherent complexities of such a task, citing what they and Dr.

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[98] Ibid, 6-7.
[99] Ibid, 7.

Grenfell would have understood as fighting a losing battle against the detrimental effects of European exposure to the culturally-sensitive and vulnerable Indigenous populations:

> The Indian and Eskimo work is difficult to promote owing, among many other conditions, to the fact that the best workers are the most inaccessible, the influence of civilization unfortunately tending rather to deteriorate than to elevate their native taste and skill. […] The Guild endeavours to adapt this skill [beadwork, porcupine quill embroidery, etc] to articles of present day use, such as electric light shades in transparent bead work, and at the same time to preserve the characteristics of racial and tribal design, colour and workmanship.[100]

Thereby acting within the bounds of early twentieth-century ethnocentrism, and despite engaging in what historians, including Paige Raibmon, have identified as a misguided quest for "authentic Indians,"[101] the Guild was sensitive to the high potential for cultural damage that could befall Indigenous cultures. Nevertheless, they viewed the ultimate goal of cultural preservation as important enough to risk proceeding with in recognition of what they perceived to be the greater good. Furthermore, similar care was taken to preserve the craft traditions of those new to the country, the Guild's pamphlets filled with pictures of foreign wares, highlighting their unique beauty and craftsmanship. Problematic as it may have been, the Guild's mandate of cultural preservation and promotion, resulting in the cultural enrichment of Canada's craft traditions, and the boosting of fortunes among the nation's various craftspeople, served to introduce a small yet significantly pluralistic element to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.

Beyond what was regarded as the transformative power of craft in regard to its ability to provide new skills and entrepreneurial opportunities, and to bolster and preserve cultural traditions and practices, there was an underlying virtue inherent to hard work and industrious self-improvement which the Guild sought to instil in its members. The worth

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[100] *The Canadian Handicraft Guild, 586 St. Catherine St W. Montreal* (Montreal: Canadian Handicrafts Guild, 1908), 10.
[101] Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

of manual labour was expounded by president Peck as a fundamental value upon which a healthy, intelligent, and wealthy national character could be constructed.[102] These sentiments echoed those shared by many, including antimodernists, Morris-inspired pro-labour socialists, and numerous others affiliated with the principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Peck's views also aligned the Guild with the moralistic sensibilities of many other female-run social organizations, while simultaneously crossing the gender divide by capturing the spirit of the male-centric Arts and Crafts Movement:

> Virtue is *energy* flowing in the right direction. Vice is *energy* flowing in the wrong direction. Both are just energy that must find some outlet. Congenial labour with the hands, the fashioning of fair things, has been proved to be an immense help in causing energy to become virtue. The handicrafts in their manifold diversity supply congenial labour for almost every order of mind, and are a safety valve that should be cherished and protected as of paramount value to our country.[103]

Handicrafts were thus helpful and representative of many things at once: a source of national pride, an educational framework by which old skills were retained and new ones mastered, a rewarding form of employment for women and men, and a virtuous cure-all for idle hands. All of this in addition to being a healthy alternative to the manufactured artifice and dehumanizing monotony of the factory floor assembly line.

In order for the Guild to function it had to make money. Patronage from the Governor General and Countess Grey, as well as generous donations from wealthy supporters, were just enough to keep the volunteer organization running, and to make possible the dozens of annual exhibitions from which the Guild generated interest and a commercial market to sell its goods. The Guild long ran a craft shop out of its Montreal headquarters on St. Catherine Street, the showroom open to the public as another source of revenue. For production purposes, the Guild relied solely upon the traditional practice of cottage industry. Contributing members included, Indigenous, French, English,

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[102] *The Canadian Handicrafts Guild*, 10.
[103] Ibid.

Scottish, Irish, Italian, Doukhobor, Scandinavian, and Syrian-Canadians, all of whom sent their completed works to Montreal to be exhibited and sold.[104] For the most part, the cottage industry system in place operated with the craftspeople plying their trade from home, and then shipping their goods to Montreal. A non-profit organization from the outset, all Guild workers were paid for their work, the promotion of labour autonomy and domestic stability put into practice through the application of this model.[105] Popular from the start, there soon came to be an excess of wares, creating the perfect opportunity to showcase, market, and sell, the ingenuity and skill of the Guild's diverse, multi-talented craft workers at craft fairs and international exhibitions around the globe.

Published in late 1917, *The Canadian Handicrafts Guild: What It Has Done*, provided annual summaries of exhibits and events performed by the Guild for its first decade. The Guild's annual itinerary became increasingly complex, the coming of war in 1914 boosting the popularity of the female-run, proudly patriotic association. Included at the end of each year's list of activities was a total sum of money paid to workers, a reminder to the reader that this was a philanthropic, not-for-profit organization:

Payments to Workers[106]			
1905	$4803.62	1912	$7610.39
1906	$4802.33	1913	$8156.78
1907	$4274.60	1914	$5365.14
1908	$3598.81	1915	$6714.18
1909	$6887.75	1916	$15554.31
1910	$4149.28	1917	$27038.39
1911	$4161.84	No Data	No Data

During its first seven years, the Guild paid its workers an average of about forty-six hundred dollars collectively per year. By 1913, that figure had doubled, only to slip back slightly over the first years of the war, and then skyrocketed in 1916 and 1917 to

[104] *The Canadian Handicraft Guild,* 6-8.
[105] Ibid, 6.
[106] *Canadian Handicrafts Guild: What It Has Done* (Montreal: Canadian Handicrafts Guild, 1917), 2-13.

$15,554.31 and $27,038.39 respectively. Unfortunately, no membership records exist prior to 1925, at which time there were 310 members, a figure which grew by 1929 to 548 with the overwhelming majority being women.[107] Without knowing how many worker-members existed during the early years, it is impossible to accurately equate how much money per person was being paid out annually. The dramatic leap seen during the war, however, is likely indicative of a great boost in membership and hence production, as goods were prepared for shipment overseas. Also, a significant effort was made by the Guild to rehabilitate returning disabled veterans by teaching them useful skills which would provide them with both an income and a sense of purpose and self-worth.[108]

The Canadian Handicrafts Guild was a significant contributor to the overall ethos of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. Founded and run by women, the Guild set itself apart from most other associations in its ability to blend the gendered realms of antimodernist craft idealism with an underlying belief in the virtues of manual labour and of the inherent value of craft traditions the world over. Through its efforts in education, exhibitions, and commercial sales, the Guild was highly effective in spreading its aims on a national and global scale. Furthermore, although its primary mission was to promote the preservation and mastery of a Canadian Crafts tradition, the Guild remained sensitive to the importance of maintaining those of the many different cultures that had come to call Canada home. Thus in its mission to empower its workforce, and to uphold the authenticity and integrity of a diverse set of cultural craft traditions and skills, the Guild can be argued to have exceeded the Arts and Crafts mandate of its sister and brother

[107] McLeod, *In Good Hands*, 164.
[108] *Canadian Handicrafts Guild: What It Has Done*, 13.

organizations. Where others lost their way, and many besides disbanded, the Guild remains in operation, its core mission having wavered little over the last century.

Conclusion

Belonging to the same close-knit network of ideas and personalities, the Arts and Letters Club, the Group of Seven, the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, and a handful of others, each brought their own approach to what contemporary commentators commonly referred to as the "Canadian Question." Leading into the twentieth century, the desire to define just what, if anything, could be comprehensively said to encapsulate Canada's identity had become something of a national pastime among the country's cultural and political elite – as defined primarily by a strong Anglo-Canadian bias. Thus, it was only natural that the rapid succession of private clubs and professional associations to arise at this time appear to have had in common, among their manifestoes, speeches, writings, and creative output, a particular notion of the ways in which their respective causes could serve the national interest – as well as their own. For every gallery showing, craft exhibition, and museum opening, there came further opportunities for exposure and professional recognition. Beyond creating a common, middle-, and upper-middle class market for their wares, Canada's cultural producers were able to make a name for themselves on the international stage, bringing Canada the degree of national prestige it had long coveted.

A comprehensive view of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement reveals that despite a significant overrepresentation of white, Protestant, Anglophone, men, it was not quite as culturally homogenous as one may conclude given the essential Englishness of its core design principles and its overtly masculine aesthetic. The relative homogeneity of

the Arts and Letters Club and Group of Seven was counterbalanced by the mixed company Arts and Crafts Society of Canada – with a female president and eighty percent female membership base, along with the female-run Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Far from operating within a vacuum, there existed a significant amount of dual membership and cross-pollination of ideas among these and many other associations dedicated to the promotion and production of Canada's arts and crafts. Thus once again, the efficacy of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement's functional symbiosis is evident. The domestic revival within Canada's streetcar suburbs was shaped from top to bottom through the combined efforts of members of the nation's cultural elite and creative class. Whether bespoke or factory-ordered, many middle-class Canadians were keen to be provided with fashionable, comfortable, modern homes, filled from pantry to parlour with all of the latest in furniture, decorations, and art, as inspired by exhibitions, print ads, or word of mouth. Promoted endlessly, both at home and abroad, the essential "Canadianness" of these goods would not have been lost on the consumer public, the malleable nature of the Movement's inherent patriotic quality, being one the key components of its success. It was thus no accident that *Canadian Homes and Gardens* was able to land a gentle gibe at the expense of the Group of Seven, the all-too-familiar image of a Harris print hung squarely above an oak mantle, already by 1930 a common enough one to elicit a chuckle.

Thus, the extent to which Canada's national image was carefully curated, its artistic, cultural production hand-selected by a narrow margin of powerful, mostly English Canadian elites, cannot be ignored. Beholden to that "English something" which was said to stitch together Canada's cultural milieu, there remained an underlying tie to King and Country in nearly every piece of mainstream art, architecture, and craftwork

produced by Canada's cultural gatekeepers well into the early twentieth century. Furthermore, in terms of the popularity and cultural significance of the Canadian Craft Movement, the concurrent domestic revival was all but synonymous with a middle-class, Anglo-Canadian conception of comfort, propriety, and style. Indeed, one cannot find an issue of *Maclean's* or *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, which did not, page after page, ad after ad, expound upon the virtues of Inglenooks, Tudor beams, and English gardens.

Together, the various branches and viewpoints of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement represented a living manifestation of the foundational principle of complete design. Like an Eden Smith cottage, designed from the inside out, the Movement came together organically, relying upon a set of symbiotic relationships which together, allowed it to flourish and spread into mainstream culture. While organizations such as the Arts and Letters Club provided fertile ground for creative ideas and individuals to express themselves and find success, there were others, such as the Group of Seven, who were able to gain still further advantages through the support of their well-connected peers. Furthermore, as strongly evidenced by the example of Eden Smith, whose connections ran deep across the spectrum of Canada's creative class, the opportunities provided by organizations such as the Club, Society, or Guild were paramount to the promotion and financial success of their artistically-inclined members. Similarly, the worker-members of the Guild were often the beneficiaries of a centralized network of support: the majority female workforce of artists and craftspeople able to craft, exhibit, and sell their wares all from their homes. Across many artistic mediums, encompassing each of the LAMPS disciplines and more, the essence of the Arts and Crafts Movement become part and parcel of Canada's middle-class, Anglo-centric view of modern life and domesticity.

Chapter 5:

In Search of a Canadian Arts and Crafts Legacy

Bungal-Ode

There's a jingle in the jungle
'Neath the juniper and pine,
They are mangling the tangle
Of the underbrush and vine,
And my blood is all a-tingle
At the sound of blow on blow,
As I count each single shingle
On my bosky bungalow

Burges Johnson
Good Housekeeping (February 1909)[1]

Introduction

When Burges Johnson's *Bungal-Ode* first appeared within the pages of *Good Housekeeping* in February, 1909, the fanciful poem would have resonated well with a North American audience familiar with the runaway success of the modern bungalow. The bungalow was well on its way to becoming the most popular form of domestic architecture, its ubiquity to rise solidly through the interwar period.[2] Across Canada and the United States, as the urban-rural balance continued to shift towards the city, the rise of the inner suburbs necessitated the construction of affordable, comfortable, modern housing to keep pace with demand. While the modest one-storey bungalow remained an affordable housing option for the working class, it was not long before its popularity succeeded in capturing the imaginations of middle- and upper-middle-class consumers. The traditional definition a bungalow – with all rooms on one floor – began to expand, the increasingly popular "two-storey bungalow" becoming an archetype for modern,

[1] Burges Johnson, "Bungal-Ode," *Good Housekeeping*, February 1909, 176.
[2] Clay Lancaster, *American Bungalow, 1880-1930* (New York: Abberville Press, 1985).

urban domesticity. Add to its success a strong, nationalist, cultural flavouring – the English Arts and Crafts in Canada, the American Craftsman in the United States – and the popularity of the bungalow can be understood as more than the desire for a new home. The bungalow, alongside home ownership, was given a cultural identity of its own, much like that which formed around automobiles for the generation to follow.

Looking deeper into Johnson's *Bungal-Ode*, appearing in one of the era's most popular domestic lifestyle magazines, it is possible to view the poem's whimsical message as evidence for the genesis of a recognizable "folk" tradition such as those discussed by Ian McKay. According to McKay, the Folk have always been a cultural construction. Similar to Helen Creighton's conceptualization, from the context of Nova Scotia, the Folk were constructed by means of an underlying cultural bias expressed through an antimodernist understanding of her subjects, a phenomena often repeated by those seeking to interpret and rationalise people and places understood to belong to a specific past. Caught up in a self-fulfilling prophecy of expectations – perceived quaintness, isolation, and otherness – the Folk are most often the product of an educated elite, their perceived cultural differences left open to interpretation and exploitation owing to what is essentially a manufactured divide. The Folk, whether the story-tellers who inspired the Brother's Grimm, the ex-slaves of the New Deal's Works Progress Administration [WPA] Federal Writer's Project, Creighton's fisherfolk, or the American folk dancers and Scottish bagpipers discussed by Daniel Walkowitz[3] and Gary West,[4] have endured a long tradition of cultural appropriation both popular and academic.

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[3] Daniel Walkowitz, *City Folk: English Country Dance and the Politics of the Folk in Modern America* (New York: New York University Press, 2010).
[4] Gary West, *Voicing Scotland: Folk, Culture, Nation* (Edinburgh: Luath Press Limited, 2012).

Figure 5.1 Webbs' Pedigree English Seeds [1930]. Well into the 1930s, the epitome of high society domesticity in Canada remained steadfastly English. From J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930).

In many ways, the vast collection of print advertisements found in popular domestic magazines, such as *Good Housekeeping* in the United States, or *Canadian Homes and Gardens* in Canada, provide a window into to the folk culture created by the rising commercial success of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. Beautifully illustrated, and accompanied with taglines imploring consumers to live simply, with nature, or to grow the perfect "English" garden, or to accent their homes with "English" stucco, these advertisements attempted to promote a particular cultural brand. No lot was too small, no home too modest, to accommodate the latest creature comforts of the modern home, or to adorn it with the most picturesque, Arts and Crafts-inspired adornments. Focused predominantly upon the newly-built homes of the inner suburbs, these advertisements promoted endless commercial solutions for the twentieth-century suburbanite, promising a future that would be clean, comfortable, modern, and Canadian.

Figure 5.2 King Conservatories and Greenhouses [1930]. Typical of advertisements dealing with architectural matters, examples of this or that product or addition on extant homes of high repute were often used in an effort to align a good or service with a certain lifestyle or social class. Here, the homes of several prominent Canadians, all in the English Arts and Crafts style, are featured as ideal models of domestic modernity, comfort, and style. From J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930).

Here, however, lies the fundamental difference between the conceptualization of "the Folk" as understood by McKay, and that of the middle-class consumer public who were the key participants within the commercial manifestation of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. An antimodernist cultural product, steeped in British traditions and packaged and marketed to Canadians as a means of entry into modern English Canada, the homes, furnishings, and other accoutrements of Canada's Craft Movement, and broader domestic revival, were meant to evoke feelings of national and cultural unity. By this, it is meant that while the fisherfolk of rural Nova Scotia were exploited by an urban consumer base for their perceived authenticity and otherness, the majority of middle-class Canadian homebuyers wilfully chose to participate in the creation of an imagined past that they could claim as their own. Instead of being sold the imagined past of a distant

"other," consumers were being sold one that was purported to be based upon a shared national bond, created to promote a certain vision of Canadian national identity.

To a great extent, the rise in commercial success of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement among working- and middle-class consumers can be linked to what architectural and cultural historians label the domestic revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[5] Begun in Britain, the domestic revival refers to the renewed interest in the so-called "Revival" styles of the era, running the gamut of English vernacular architecture, including Queen Anne, Neo-Gothic, Tudor, Jacobean, and Arts and Crafts. While the latter eventually came to be an umbrella term for all of the former, among architectural historians, the discrepancies between each have remained highly important. Furthermore, in terms of the Arts and Crafts, it is broadly understood among architectural historians to denote a movement, not a style, though the latter conceptualization remained popular both at the time, and on to the present day. Nevertheless, the Arts and Crafts Movement, a key ingredient of the larger domestic revival, was a strong cultural force unto itself, one which shaped the ways in which many middle-class Canadians came to view themselves, their homes, and modern domestic life.

Especially potent within Canada during the early the twentieth century, when according to Annmarie Adams,[6] Kelly Crossman,[7] Pierre Mayrand, and John Bland,[8] Canadians had become pre-occupied with national identity, the domestic revival and Arts and Crafts Movement served to provide an image of what it meant to be Canadian.

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[5] Annmarie Adams, "Eden Smith and the Canadian Domestic Revival," *Urban History Review* 21, no. 2 (March 1993): 104-115.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Kelly Crossman, *Architecture in Transition: From Art to Practice, 1885-1906* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987).
[8] Pierre Mayrand and John Bland, *Three Centuries of Architecture in Canada* (Montreal: Federal Publications Service, 1971).

Accordingly, as demonstrated within the writings of Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and their architectural peers, the need to invent, in Nobbs' estimation, was to be a defining factor of Canada's Arts and Crafts-tinted brush with the domestic revival. Spreading quickly among English-speaking, middle-class households, the rich cultural discourse of the Canadian domestic revival was disseminated through a variety of means, including print ads, catalogues, magazines, and newspapers, all of this in addition to the professional periodicals produced by the architectural industry. From the late 1880s to the 1930s, the first wave of Canada's modern domestic revival was dominated both stylistically and philosophically by the cultural weight of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. Indeed, there is not a movement or vernacular style of domestic architecture which more solidly defines the inner suburbs of Canadian cities great and small as those found within the purview of the Arts and Crafts. From the end of the Victorian Era to the Second World War, there remained one predominant house type among the ads, articles, and catalogues of the day – those derived from the English-Canadian domestic revival.

A century removed, a central aim of this study has been to better understand both the origins of the domestic revival that shaped much of early twentieth-century Canada, and the architectural and cultural legacy that its physical remains have left behind. Strongly connected to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, and by extension the Anglo-centric cultural identity promoted to middle-class consumers, the homes that defined the nation's streetcar suburbs became a reflection of modern Canadian life. Thus to the three most significant concentrations of these homes to be built, and hence to the work of Canada's premiere figures in the medium, the fieldwork for this dissertation brought the author to the inner suburbs of Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria. House visits

were made to a carefully selected collection of homes built by Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure, a process defined by interviews and photo-documentation. Following in the methodological footsteps of Joy Parr, who spent four years embedded within the post-industrial communities of Paris and Hanover, Ontario to better understand the cultural legacy left by successive generations of male and female breadwinners, this study took a similar approach. Talking across kitchen tables, and lingering at least long enough to get to know the participants for an afternoon spent "amid the particulars of daily life,"[9] the fieldwork for this study served to bring a tangible quality and innate familiarity with the subject that no end of archival images of historic homes could provide.

Through discussions in the living rooms and parlours of dozens of prime examples of Arts and Crafts homes built by Canada's leading Arts and Crafts architects, the information provided by present-day homeowners was of great importance to this study. Not only did this information add extra context and historic understanding, but the process also served to reinforce the basis upon which the century-long cultural impact and social memory of Canada's Arts and Crafts-informed domestic revival can be appreciated and understood. Given the connections made by Parr, and with respect to the historic role of gender within working- and middle-class perceptions of work, craftsmanship, consumerism, and domesticity, the fieldwork provided a rare opportunity to document the cultural imprint and lasting legacy of Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement. Highly homogenous, and largely defined by multi-generational wealth and demographic stability, the enclaves of Arts and Crafts homes in Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria, mirror the metrics one could apply to most small towns. Connected through

[9] Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 229.

professional and familial ties to Canada's cultural elite, the majority of participants were, if not necessarily by birthright, the descendents of those who had originally bought into the domestic revival of the early twentieth century. Attracted to their comfortable, well-built, and efficiently-designed bungalows and English cottages for many of the same reasons that had captured the imaginations of the original owners, the participants were well aware of the legacy of craftsmanship and domestic idealism to which they belonged.

Methodologically closer still to the work of Peter Stevens, whose PhD dissertation concerning family cottaging in and around Lake Muskoka took the author into the homes of four dozen cottagers, the oral history component of this current study accords with Stevens' own reported experiences.[10] Echoing Stevens, the decision to visit and document Arts and Crafts homes across Canada was based on the premise that the modern-day echoes of Canada's domestic revival would be best found among the Movement's architectural remains. Architectural records and heritage rosters were consulted in concert with Google Maps' Street View function, resulting in the creation of a short-list of homes and homeowners to solicit for participation. It became quickly evident that even among the relatively small sample of participants interviewed in each city, particular patterns and themes were beginning to emerge. Benefiting from a far larger geographical pool of participants than could be assessed by Stevens within a small part of northern Ontario, the data gathered in this study provided significantly more insights and useful information than that which, according to Stevens, was either greatly condensed or omitted from his final draft. Forming the basis of this chapter, the fieldwork

[10] Peter A. Stevens, "Getting Away from It All: Family Cottaging in Postwar Ontario" (PhD diss., York University, 2010), 450.

undertaken in the wealthiest, most exclusive neighbourhoods in Canada, brought to light a wealth of revelatory information and valuable primary material.

All of this being said, there remain many of the same methodological limitations associated with oral history, first and foremost being what Stevens and others have identified as the "self-selecting"[11] principle which cannot be ignored. For while many packages were sent out to homeowners in all of the target cities, only a portion, often less than half of the total available sample, were returned with affirmations of participation. Ostensibly in some way already invested in their homes' architectural pedigree, the participants were self-selected, opting to fill out the necessary forms, return them to the sender, and become part of the study. Aware of the many special considerations that must be taken when engaging in oral history, it has been a central aim of this study to avoid following too closely in the footsteps of early ethnographers and folklorists such as Creighton or the WPA. Ample caution was required to avoid the same problematic drive for authenticity that had proved a challenge both to early folklorists and to the Craft Movement. In the pursuit of what Lears describes as "authentic" experience, it was necessary to remain grounded in the fact that the selected houses could represent little more than nicely-kept century homes, their owners simply those fortunate enough to own them. In the end, vast the majority of participants reported a deep appreciation for their homes and what they represented, including several who had endeavoured to keep the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement alive in the twenty-first century.

Once a list for each city had been compiled, it was necessary to send each homeowner a large package that introduced myself, explained the project, and included all of the required permission forms and the interview questions. With regard to the

[11] Ibid.

interview questions, it was important to compile a questionnaire attuned to the participants' sensibilities and comfort levels, yet still able to provide the study with the desired information. The questions as reproduced below represent the finalized set:

1. How long have you lived in your home?

2. Was this your first experience buying/living in an older home?

3. What most attracted you to this type of home?

4. How important was it to own a specifically "Arts and Crafts" house? i.e.: Were the traditional features of such a home, such as blended indoor/outdoor space, open living, or the incorporation of natural materials a priority?

5. Prior to purchasing, did you conduct any research? Were you aware of the history of the home? Of the architect? Of the neighbourhood?

6. What changes have you made to the home, or which existing ones are you aware of?

7. What efforts towards preservation or restoration have you made?

8. As the owner of a historic/heritage property, what responsibilities do you feel towards the integrity and character of the house?

9. Which features do you most like about the home? Which do you dislike?

10. Do you find living in an historic property at all restricting? i.e.: Would the modern conveniences of a newer dwelling offer any relief?

11. Is owning an historic property for everyone? What words of wisdom would you have for anyone in the market for a century home?

12. Given the option, would you buy the same home again?

13. How would you rate the comfort with which you and/or your family are able to live and co-exist within the home? Does the house work well as a personal/family dwelling?

14. If you could have had a say in the original design of the house, what recommendations would you make to the architect? What features would you keep/alter?

15. What is your favourite part of owning an "Arts and Crafts" home? The style? Owning a piece of history? The neighbourhood? The "project" aspect of restoration/renovation? Other?

16. Finally, what type of legacy, if any, could you attribute to your home and those like it? Could/should homebuilders today take some lessons from the past? Would you say your house is an ideal house type for family homes today?

The main objective was to identify three main points. First, it was important to ascertain the importance the owner had attached to their home being an "Arts and Crafts"

home, along with all that might imply about their knowledge of the home's history, its architect, and cultural significance. Second, several questions were geared towards provoking a discussion about any changes or alterations made to the homes. The objective here was to gauge how much the participants had done themselves, and where they viewed themselves on the spectrum of restoration versus renovation. These questions were posed in order to asses how important the home's historic integrity or heritage was to the participants. Lastly, the critically important issue of whether the participants believed there to exist an Arts and Crafts legacy held within the architectural design and material aesthetic of their homes was included. The possibility of a living legacy, in terms of design philosophy, craftsmanship, materiality, or even authenticity was hereby discussed with the intent of gaining further insights into the connection between home and homeowner. Owing to the fact that the domestic revival represented such a significant cultural moment, this final question sought to assess the living legacy of the domestic, architectural side of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.

Despite the subtle cultural differences of each locale, the majority of participants shared a few basic traits, which helped place them both demographically, and in terms of what may have initially drawn them to their homes. Nearly all of the participants could be said to fall into the group identified by Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson as the "Laurentian elite," [12] sharing similarities with the contingent of white, liberal arts-educated, professionals said to reside in century homes in Toronto's Annex or Ottawa's

[12] Darrel Bricker and John Ibbitson, *The Big Shift: The Seismic Change in Canadian Politics, Business, and Culture and what it Means for Our Future* (Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers Ltd., 2013), 1-5.

Glebe.[13] An affinity for arts and culture was also a common theme, with many of the participants stating an interest, as exhibited by the discovery of several exemplary personal art collections. Indeed, many among them had been painters, photographers, architects, and professional art collectors at one time or another. Though not nearly as proportionately wealthy, and with no household staff in sight, it was no great leap to view the present-day owners of these Arts and Crafts homes as being the successors of the original inhabitants. Originally built for the cultural elite of Canada – a mixed collection of professionals, artists, professors, and socialites – these homes had seemingly passed from one generation to the next to a certain set, definable at least in one major way, by the type of home they had sought out for themselves and their families. Thus from Toronto to Montreal, and across the Rocky Mountains to Victoria, the fieldwork brought the current study into the historic epicentre of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, into the homes, parlours, and sitting rooms of Canada's original domestic revival.

"For I oft get bungalonely, in the mingled human drove": Toronto, Ontario

In James Joyce's *The Dubliners* [1905], the relatively new social phenomenon of urban loneliness is explored through the lives of various characters. Understood at the time as the inevitable condition of a modern, city lifestyle, one of increased anonymity and solitude, this new feeling of being at once alone and a part of something larger was in the process of being defined, classified, and treated psychologically at the precise moment that the Arts and Crafts Movement emerged. Artfully captured by Joyce, the protagonists combat the travails of modern, middle-class, urban existence, shuffling through the motions as they fall in love, suffer heartache, drink plenty and often, and live

[13] Toronto's Annex is bounded to the west by Bathurst Street, to the east by Spadina Avenue, to the north by Dupont Street, and to the south by Bloor Street. Ottawa's Glebe is bounded to north by Highway 417, to the south and east by the Rideau Canal, and to the west by Dow's Lake.

and die by their own hands. The city takes on a life of its own, the streets, offices, apartments, back alleys and taverns of the Irish capital becoming a character unto itself. Born of this era, and part of a literary and artistic tradition that was beginning to take notice of the realities of modern, city living, the Arts and Crafts Movement sought to address and remedy society's ills through craftsmanship and architecture. In Toronto, with its large British population at the start of the twentieth century (though they may not have been *Dubliners*) as Torontonians, they encountered many of the same challenges.

By the time Toronto architect, founding member of the Toronto Society of Arts, and the city's first official land surveyor, John Howard [1803-1890] retired in 1855, he had amassed a sprawling one hundred and twenty acre tract of land abutting the Humber River, spanning from present-day Bloor Street to the shores of Lake Ontario.[14] Howard donated the land to the City of Toronto in 1873 upon the condition that the expanding city would maintain it as parkland, and allow him and his family to reside upon it and receive a modest annual pension of twelve hundred dollars.[15] Two years later, the City acquired an adjacent, one hundred and seventy acre parcel of parkland, and together the entire lot became High Park, with Howard given the honourary role of Park Ranger.[16] By century's end, the leafy environs of High Park, located at the western edge of the city, and already known to artists through Howard's social circle dating back to the 1830s, provided Eden Smith and his colleagues within the Toronto arts community with an ideal, naturalistic setting to call home. In 1896, Eden Smith designed and built the first of two homes for himself and his family at 405 (267) Indian Rd, near the eastern edge of High

[14] Edith G. Firth, "Howard, John George." *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (Toronto and Quebec: University of Toronto/Université Laval, 1982), accessed on July 22, 2019, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/howard_john_george_11E.html
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

Park.[17] Smith's was one of the first, followed over the next decade by a collection of large, handsomely built brick homes, several by Smith, which were constructed for his his peers. Among Smith's acquaintances to make the move were the artists George A. Reid at 435 Indian Rd, Gustav Hahn at 96 Boustead Ave [Smith, 1902], jewellery designer William H. Reid at 94 Boustead Ave [Smith, 1903], musician Paul Hahn at 433 (295) Indian Rd [Smith, 1907], fellow architect and member of the Eighteen Club C. Acton Bond at 8 Indian Grove, along with businessman George A. Howell at 6 Indian Grove, and lawyer E. A. DuVernet at 401 (261) Indian Rd.[18] Comprising many of Smith's future colleagues within the Arts and Letters Club, nearly every one of his High Park compatriots would later follow Smith to Wychwood Park.[19]

At first glance, the majority of the traditional homes in High Park appear similar to those found in many other mature neighbourhoods circling central Toronto. No longer built in the fussy, High Victorian fashion of a generation prior, the houses of the early twentieth century were larger, more open, and more subdued in decoration and colour scheme. These were modern homes, built for comfort and a more relaxed mode of life. In the place of formal parlours and servants' quarters was an abundance of open plan living, brought to life with large bays of casement windows that opened fully and let in the light. Living rooms were made cozy with oak-wrapped inglenook fireplaces, built-in bookcases, and electric light, creating a domestic environment which seemed more conducive to rest and relaxation. Masculine in their Arts and Crafts derived materiality and efficient designs, the majority of homes in Canada's streetcar suburbs served to

[17] W. Douglas Brown, *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect* (Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003), 43.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Wychwood Park is located immediately northwest of Bathurst Street and Davenport Road.

reinforce a nationalistic domestic ideal that viewed the home as an extension of one's character. While *Canadian Homes and Gardens* characterized the coming of the "cottage stage" as a call for homes that were "comfortable, honest and unpretentious,"[20] Canada's middle class was also seeking domestic spaces that aligned them to a specific brand of Anglo-Canadian nationalism and modernity. Wild yet refined, rural and urban, masculine but gentle, Canada's Arts and Crafts-inspired brush with the domestic revival served as a key identifier of the national ethos. A Group of Seven painting writ large, the homes of the era were created as an expression of modern Canada.

Figure 5.3 267 Indian Road [1896] in Toronto. Smith's family home in High Park was also one of his first in the English Cottage style that he perfected here and later in Wychwood Park and elsewhere during his career. The home features several of Smith's trademarks design cues, such as the hidden side entrance, sweeping roofline, and irregular massing. Photo captured by the author on October 15, 2012.

[20] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930), 48.

The natural beauty of High Park, with its canopy of mature trees, and gentle rolling terrain leading down to Lake Ontario, was an ideal setting for the collection of Arts and Crafts homes that soon came to define the neighbourhood. Smith's family home contains many clues as to its unique pedigree, including the steep pitch of the roofline, asymmetrical cedar shingle gable, and the inclusion of one of the architect's signature, tall, slender chimneys. The front porch, with its bay of leaded glass casement windows, reveals the tell-tale absence of a front door. The hidden entranceway is tucked away on the right side of the home, further obscured by a modest overhang concealing an antique mechanical bell. There can be no mistake - Eden Smith lived here. All around the house, the Craft philosophy follows, from the use of natural materials, to the abundance of heavy woodwork, to the comfortable, simple layout of the home. The centerpiece of the home is the exquisite inglenook fireplace that seems to beckon visitors to nestle down and take comfort in its warmth. However, despite what might be expected from the home of Toronto's premiere Arts and Crafts architect, the home is neither as grand in scale, nor as rich in detail – save for the inglenook - of those he built for his friends nearby.

The first house visit made in Toronto was with Terry Ryan, the then long-time owner of the 1896 Smith House in High Park. Terry had lived in his home for fifteen years, and had long before that, as a student at the Art College of Ontario in the 1950s, become fascinated with art and architecture, with a particular interest in the Arts and Crafts.[21] A lifetime enthusiast and professional patron and collector of Inuit art, Terry had adorned the interior of his Canadian-made, British-influenced Arts and Crafts home with numerous prints and watercolours depicting stylized scenes of the Far North.

[21] Terry Ryan, interview by the author, Toronto, ON, November 27, 2012.

Figure 5.4 Interior, 267 Indian Road [1896] in Toronto. The rich material warmth of the oak-wrapped inglenook at the Smith family home in High Park has retained its charm 120 years after its construction. Photo captured by the author on October 15, 2012.

Combined with the fact that the house had remained largely intact, the overall effect was one that appeared to suit the home well, its well-maintained original features complemented by a carefully curated array of Canada's natural abundance and raw beauty. The home embodied the quintessential British-Canadian, antimodernist, Arts and Crafts identity that Smith had imprinted onto it, the house privy to the same type of cultural staging that political scientist Benedict Anderson has attributed to the work of the Group of Seven.[22] From the oak-wrapped inglenook, to the simple treatment of the casements and mouldings, and outside to the natural palette of mottled clay bricks and dark cedar shingles, the home exuded a studied sense of familiarity, one which made it and countless others like it, comfortable, inviting, and highly fashionable. The large

[22] Benedict Anderson, "Staging Antimodernism in the Age of High Capitalist Nationalism," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Canadian Art*, eds., John O'Brien and Peter White (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2007), 245-6.

collection of Inuit art further cemented the home's status as a living symbol of the same nationalistic self imagery that Canadian art historian Robert Stacey credited for giving the Group of Seven its supposed northern distinctiveness.[23]

Terry, a Toronto native whose family roots went back to the days of Muddy York, and the Rebellion of 1837, had witnessed eight decades of change in his hometown. On the topic of change, Terry believed that one should simply "buy a different house" if their vision for a historic home involves first removing everything that makes it so.[24] Owing perhaps to his age, Terry was more vocal than most about his level of comfort and satisfaction with living in a historic property. He had lived in similar, if even older homes his entire life in Toronto, and this was no exception. When asked about the Heritage Toronto plaque standing in his front garden, Terry noted that despite being somewhat invasive – he mused that passers-by would often ask after Mr. Smith – that the potential restrictions that can come with an historic property were not too much of a burden.[25] "On the contrary," Terry recalled, one would, "lose the ambiance and sense of history living in a condo."[26] History had driven him to buy his home, and he had quickly apprised himself of much of the available material pertaining to its architect. Ready with a pile of archival materials, including original blueprints and sketches, Terry spoke a great deal about the man who had built his home. For Terry, the few images that remain of Smith, in particular the well-known portrait of the architect in his starched, grey flannel suit, reminded him of his own family history. Terry recalled that his great grandfather had

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[23] Robert Stacey, "The Myth – and Truth – of the True North," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Canadian Art*, eds., John O'Brien and Peter White (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2007), 261.
[24] Terry Ryan.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.

owned a draper shop in the 1850s, and that even in his parent's day, it was the norm for Toronto socialites to dress for dinner in their finest suits and gowns. It amused Terry to think of Smith, in what was likely his only good suit, climbing trees, and jumping down into excavation sites, all the while in the company of the well-to-do men and women of generations past.[27] For Terry, his connection to his home ran deep, its value one that intersected with his family history as well as that of his hometown and neighbourhood.

The cultural legacy of Smith's High Park estate will continue beyond Mr. Ryan's stewardship, the house having since changed hands. The *Globe and Mail* featured the house as its "Home of the Week" in 2013, less than a year after our interview, on account of its sale. Beyond the home's unique architectural features and original details, special mention was made to the home's "best feature," this being the celebrated inglenook fireplace, with its rich oak, subtle tile work, and brilliant use of soft, natural light as supplied from the perfectly situated leaded glass windows.[28] It was also mentioned that the inglenook had received further recognition, having been photographed – for a reported eight hours – for the National Gallery of Canada in preparation for a special exhibit. Running from 2013-14, *Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890-1918*, was a celebration of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, showcasing art and architectural prints and sketches from many of Canada's premiere artists and architects, including Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure.[29] This recent notoriety, in conjunction with the heritage plaque, will help keep the house in the public eye for the foreseeable future. For

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[27] Ibid.
[28] Carolyn Ireland, "Home of the Week: Eden Smith house a classic of Toronto architecture." *The Globe and Mail*, October 3, 2013, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/home-and-garden/real-estate/home-of-the-week-eden-smith-house-a-classic-of-toronto-architecture/article14694905/
[29] *Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890-1918*, National Gallery of Canada: Exhibitions, accessed April 9, 2015, https://www.gallery.ca/en/see/exhibitions/past/details/artists-architects-and-artisans-canadian-art-1890-1918-5319

though it may be some time before an "Eden Smith" exhibit comes to fruition, his first home in High Park, and his second, in Wychwood Park, remain a testament to his vision.

Built in 1904 for William H. Reid, a craftsman and designer for Canadian jewellery magnate Henry Birks, the fancifully-named Ivy Lodge at 94 Boustead Avenue remains one of the finest examples of Smith's High Park homes.[30] Composed of a soft, reddish-brown brick exterior, the home is quintessentially Smith, its English cottage roots, and Arts and Crafts sensibilities, immediately recognizable, along with the front porch and entranceway artfully obscured by a low stone wall and gate. The home retains a remarkably preserved interior, complete with original oak beams and panelling, comfortably sized principal rooms, and several well-lit bays of leaded glass windows.

Figure 5.5 94 Boustead Ave. [1904] in Toronto. The W. H. Reid House features many of Smith's signature design cues, including one of the architect's famous, hidden entranceways. Photo captured by the author on November 2, 2012.

[30] Donna Jean Mackinnon, "A Craftsman's Legacy," *The Toronto Star*, November 8, 1987, E1;E3.

Once again, the centrepiece of the home is the exquisite inglenook fireplace, a mutual effort between the homeowner and artist George A. Reid – no relation – who finished the space with a mural. W. H. Reid, a professional craftsman and Arts and Crafts enthusiast, fashioned a hand-hammered bronze hood, while the mural, depicting a bucolic view of High Park, stylistically reminiscent of the Group of Seven, was supplied by George Reid – a mutual acquaintance of both W. H. Reid and Smith.[31] Considered as a whole, along with the owner's later artistic embellishments, the W. H. Reid House remains one of the most eccentric among Smith's oeuvre – a collaborative artistic effort worthy of the Arts and Letters Club to which all involved were members.

In terms of the home's living legacy, Ivy Lodge represents a rare example of a

Figure 5.6 94 Boustead Ave. [1904] in Toronto. A joint effort, the Smith-designed inglenook fireplace features a mural by G. A. Reid, and a hand-crafted bronze hood by owner and craftsman W. H. Reid. Photo captured by the author on November 2, 2012.

[31] Ibid, E1.

century home that has remained with a single family (except for a brief period of financial difficulty in 1923), having been passed down over three generations.[32] Gail Reid, widow of the late Mr. Reid (W. H. Reid's grandson) had inherited her husband's family estate, a home which over the last half-century she had come to view as her own.[33] Gail stated that the home gave her peace of mind, a comforting space to relax and unwind, and lately, a place of quiet reflection. In terms of the home's many original Arts and Crafts details, Gail reported a deep reverence – one which ran concurrent to her own artistic and professional aspirations as the editor and publisher of a boutique magazine.[34]

Figure 5.7 94 Boustead Ave. [1904] in Toronto. One of two sets of merry-making monks painted by W. H. Reid, the ones pictured here were found perched above the oak panelling within the dining room. Photo captured by the author on November 2, 2012.

After a detailed discussion of the home, her family history, and Gail's favourite memories of the house, the question of legacy seemed to give her pause to reflect before

[32] Ibid.
[33] Gail Reid, interview by the author, Toronto, ON, November 2, 2012.
[34] Ibid.

conveying the most intriguing part of the conversation. Over the course of the afternoon, Gail had begun to make references to the comforting sense of "balance" she felt within the architect-designed home.[35] Its studied proportionality, the mark of a skilled architect, and certainly among the many tenets of the Arts and Crafts Movement, made Gail feel at ease. More than once throughout the interview, Gail brought up the artistic theory known as the Rule of Thirds, a central component of the Golden Ratio, which is believed by some to govern the perceived inherent aesthetic quality of art and architecture.[36] Borrowed in large part from human perceptions of beauty in nature, these artistic guidelines have been moulded by each succeeding generation of artist and architect – the Arts and Crafts Movement being no exception – since the days of the Ancient Greeks. When it came to the topic of architectural legacy, Gail revealed that in a myriad of subtle ways, the specific, carefully laid out proportionality, balance, and design of her home had fostered her own, innate sense of design.[37] Gail had late in life discovered what she believed to be her own nascent eye for art and design, a talent which she now attributed in large part to the influence of her home.[38] Whether putting together a multi-page spread, or arranging the all-important cover shot, Gail had come to the realization that at the base of her creative inspiration resided a lifelong debt to the creative impulses of Eden Smith.

From its inception, Ivy Lodge has inspired artistic creation. Beginning with the original owner, who adorned the home with several of his own pieces of craftsmanship, including the hand-hammered bronze hood, in addition to a carefully-crafted grandfather clock, that according to family lore, fell silent the night he passed away, artistic

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[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.

inspiration had become a cross-generational phenomenon.[39] By far the most intriguing artistic addition made by W. H. Reid was the collection of voluptuous nudes – the so-called "Indian Princesses" – that once graced numerous rooms. An enthusiastic amateur artist later in life, Mr. Reid is reported to have taken to painting quite naturally, and plied

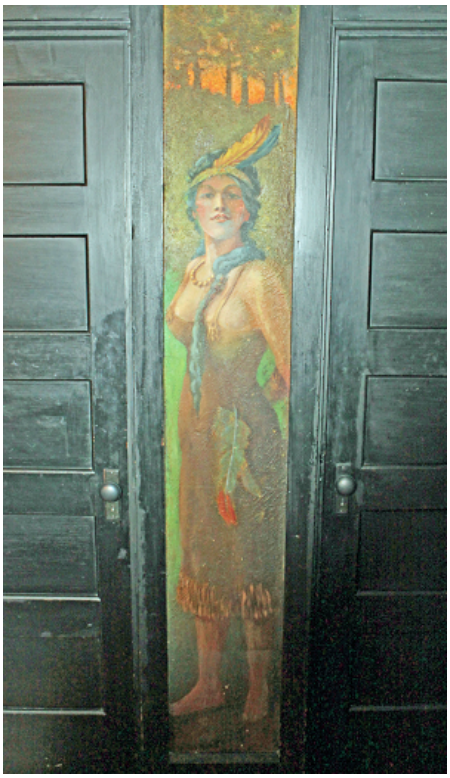

Figure 5.8 94 Boustead Ave. [1904] in Toronto. The last remaining "Indian Princess" as originally painted by W. H. Reid. Reid's daughter Bernice added a string top bikini for modesty following her father's death in the late 1930s. Photo captured by the author on November 2, 2012.

his skill in every corner of the house.[40] Gail fondly recalled this piece of family history, showing me upstairs to reveal the last to remain, albeit with an improvised bikini top added for modesty by her mother-in-law in the late 1930s.[41] The young bride-to-be was apparently so scandalized by her late father's questionable tastes that upon inheriting the estate, she had all but one of his creations painted over.[42] Bernice, daughter of W. H. Reid, later regretted her sanctimonious youth, and in her dotage happily recalled her

[39] Mackinnon, "A Craftsman's Legacy," E3.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Gail Reid.
[42] Ibid.

father's eccentric flair. In 1987, the *Toronto Star* reported that though Bernice had altered little beyond the artwork, she had since taken up antique collecting,[43] a passion which had brought a more feminine touch to what had originally been a deeply masculine space.

Gender, in relation to art, architecture, and its relationship to domestic space, have been showcased to a considerable extent with the living example of what transpired over the last century at Ivy Lodge. When W. H. Reid, himself a trained craftsman and jeweller for a prestigious firm, hired Eden Smith to build a home for himself and his family, it is more than likely that the astute, hands-on Reid pored over blueprints, contributed to key design decisions, and in general, made certain his voice was heard. While it is uncertain whether or not Smith ever visited the home during Mr. Reid's "Indian Princess" phase, it is almost certain, that unlike the odd bronze-hammered hood, or grandfather clock, the artistic eccentricities of the homeowner would not have fit well with Smith's decidedly more down-to-earth artistic sensibilities. After the stifling, restrictive aesthetic of the late Victorian Age – one steeped in matriarchal overtones – the Arts and Crafts had arrived very much as the physical manifestation of the burgeoning twentieth century. Whether W. H. Reid was aware of it or not, his choice of home, its masculine aesthetic full of dark tones, minimal decoration, and solid, rational principles of design, were all a part of a much larger trend.[44] The fact that W. H. Reid further made his mark upon the home, adding his own flourishes, and adorning the walls with bare-chested "Indian Princesses," boldly announced the status of the homeowner both as a craftsman upon an equal playing field to that of Smith, the hired professional, and as the man of the house.

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[43] Mackinnon, "A Craftsman's Legacy," E3.

[44] For further reference on masculine domesticity, and the reclaiming of gendered domestic spaces, see: Steven M. Gelber, "Do-It-Yourself: Constructing, Repairing and Maintaining Domestic Masculinity," *American Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (March 1997).

Over the years, cultural appropriation, in one form or another, has been a recurrent theme in the aesthetic evolution of the home. Beginning with W. H. Reid and his "Indian Princesses," the original owner's fondness for what he would have understood as primitive imagery akin to contemporary views of the "noble savage," mixed with culturally-weighted notions of gender and race dynamics, were later reconceived and rationalized by later generations. Through Bernice's efforts to tone down her father's eccentric, and by her time, more salacious artistic tendencies, going so far as to alter or even erase much of W. H. Reid's artistic flourishes, hers was an attempt at cultural appropriation of another kind. A young woman during the relatively conservative 1930s and 1940s, and a generation removed from the Roaring Twenties, and another still from the Victorian Era, Bernice's decision to fill her father's home with Victorian antiques was just as powerful a statement of ownership as any number of merry-making monks or bare-chested maidens. Moving into the present, whereby sensibilities around history, heritage, and authenticity have returned, it was not surprising to learn of Gail's high degree of reverence for the home's original features and familial eccentricities.

Gail stated that the home had in more ways than one, assumed the role of both muse and mentor in relation to her own artistic experimentation. The house, according to Gail, designed with such care, and with an astute eye for balance, simplicity, and material quality, had informed and nurtured her creative talent and innate design interests.[45] This reaction, which both Gail and her female predecessor shared, represented a scenario in which two different women, generations apart, had entered into what can be characterized as a complex, gendered relationship with the house. Having both inherited an overtly masculine space, each had reacted in related, yet different ways. While Bernice had done

[45] Gail Reid.

her best to reclaim the home and put her own feminine stamp upon it, Gail had been caught off guard, having relied almost exclusively upon her late husband's recollections of the home and the history associated with it. Gail had until very recently, been a passive partner in the home's stewardship and restoration by her late husband, and whether consciously or not, had deferred much of the credit for her own artistic ability to the distinguished men of letters who had designed her home a century prior.

In John Berger's 1972 BBC mini-series, *Ways of Seeing*, the renowned cultural historian and social commentator argued that over the centuries, men and women have interacted with art – female nudes, most aptly, among other examples – very much along gendered lines. The way we see art, how it is viewed in the eye of the beholder, and how it is created, reproduced, and commodified, can all, according to Berger, be more clearly understood once put under the lens of gender and class. If this framework is to be accepted, it could then quite naturally be extended to the passing of Ivy Lodge from one generation to the next. From William, to Bernice, and on to Gail, the passing on of the home has fallen along similar lines. From masculine domicile and personal canvas, to its days as a matronly, bedoilied living museum, and onward into its perceived role as a male-centric, artistic mentor, the home has assumed a myriad of different purposes, changing to suit the personalities and idiosyncratic proclivities of its various stewards. In essence, the house has been seen, over its century-long lifespan, in more or less the precise way in which its current keeper desired. In terms of an architectural legacy, Ivy Lodge – or more precisely, the guiding design principles of its architect – succeeded in inspiring a passion for art and craftsmanship that has transcended three generations.

Moving on to Wychwood Park, the enclave of homes tucked away from the rest of the city since its creation as an urban refuge and artists' colony, the bucolic neighbourhood remains the crown jewel in Smith's impressive body of work. Mapped out by landscape artist Marmaduke Matthews in the 1880s, when the area was situated outside of city limits, the neighbourhood that became Wychwood Park after its 1909 amalgamation, was and continues to be the closest approximation of a winding, cottage-country setting at the heart of Old Toronto. Beginning with the completion his second family home in 1906, Smith eventually built eleven homes in Wychwood Park over a seventeen-year period. The sublime naturalistic setting, absent of stop signs, traffic lights, curbs, and perhaps most significantly, a rectilinear city grid, placed it far closer to the picturesque, Arts and Crafts ideal that had been striven for by Smith in High Park. In Wychwood Park, Smith had his muse, an unspoiled urban retreat in the heart of the city, replete with mature trees, native flowers, and a babbling brook. The English Cottage was a natural choice, Wychwood Park offering Smith the closest approximation of the British countryside he had known in his youth, the self-contained enclave just the sort of "closed vista," as touted by Nobbs as the ideal setting in which to truly make one's mark.

Located at 5 Wychwood Park, Smith's 1906 home is noticeably sturdier in its materiality and more firmly rooted in the Gothic Revival and English Cottage tradition than his somewhat more eclectic 1896 dwelling in High Park. Faced in a mix of mottled, reddish-brown bricks at ground level, and topped with white stucco gables, the house is also brighter in tone than its predecessor, and achieves a more earthy colour palette with its predominant reliance upon brick, stone, and cedar shingles. Casement windows are used to great effect, another characteristic of Smith's Arts and Crafts-informed

Figure 5.9 5 Wychwood Park [1906] in Toronto. Smith's second home, extended at a much later date with an addition (right), showcases many of the architect's English Cottage motifs, including the use of stucco, mottled brick, and casement windows. Image courtesy Architectural Conservancy Ontario.

philosophy of design, which placed a very high importance upon the use of natural light to warm and illuminate the right rooms at the right time. The abundance of windows, especially in such an inspiring, natural setting, helped Smith achieve another of the Arts and Crafts' main objectives – to bring the outside in. Lastly, while Smith's Wychwood Park home was again one of the first, and served to set the tone for the neighbourhood, his was once more not among the largest or most grandiose – Smith even in his heyday never achieving more than a comfortable, yet relatively modest standard of living.

By contrast, the significantly larger E. A. DuVernet House at 16 Wychwood Park, set upon an expansive, irregularly shaped lot at the centre of the neighbourhood, was designed by Smith for the prominent Toronto lawyer and fellow Arts and Letters Club

member in 1910.[46] The Arts and Crafts design elements, such as the spacious verandah, which would have doubled as a summertime dining and sleeping porch, help position the home within the Craftsman tradition. Additionally, the main block of the house, segmented by a series of horizontal planes, and punctuated by two rows of casement windows and bays, gives the home an almost Prairie School-like character. Morris with a dash of Wright, this Smith home combines elements of the British Arts and Crafts tradition with those of the American Craftsman. The overall effect, however, with its grey stucco, red brick, casement window bays, and an interior rich in wood tones and leaded glass, does lend itself more naturally towards the architect's English design bias.

Figure 5.10 16 Wychwood Park [1910] in Toronto. The E. A. DuVernet House is the largest of Smith's Wychwood creations, the stately home commanding a considerable presence at the heart of the picturesque neighbourhood. Image courtesy Architectural Conservancy Ontario.

[46] Brown, *Eden Smith*, 7.

The bulk of Smith's Wychwood Park creations follow much more closely within the English cottage ideal, albeit with a modern, urban-suburban twist. The best example of this is the G. A. Howell House [1911] at 7 Wychwood Park, built for yet another of Smith's colleagues within the Arts and Letters Club. The house features an A-frame roofline, faced with a darkly stained cedar shingle gable that meets the ground floor with a sharp transition to a smooth, white stucco finish. Paired with one of Smith's signature hidden entranceways, the customarily slender chimney is perched above a small garage, the latter if original, a notably modern inclusion for a house built before the First World War. Appearing to exude emotion through its expressive use of high-contrast transitions, the house falls just short of what the architect might have called artistic "swagger," the home highly representative of what Smith once referred to as architecture that sings.[47]

Figure 5.11 7 Wychwood Park [1911] in Toronto. The G. A. Howell House is by far the moodiest, and most starkly modern of Smith's domestic works in Toronto. From Brown, W. Douglas. *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect*. Mississauga, ON: W. Douglas Brown 2003.

[47] Eden Smith, "Canadian House Architecture," *Maclean's Magazine*, March, 1911, 97-101.

Wychwood Park embodies all of the key elements of the English Arts and Crafts ideal. The location and setting – offering the unique blend of a suburban enclave in the midst of a relatively more urban context at the periphery of Old Toronto – allows for the perfect interplay of a subtly controlled natural environment, with the surrounding hustle and bustle of the city. Tamed only by a narrow, meandering road with no curbs, sidewalks, or streetlights, the environs of Wychwood Park offer a more than serviceable impression that one has left the city behind them, and has entered into something between the English countryside, and a late-nineteenth-century North American Garden Suburb. The many Smith homes that populate the neighbourhood, with their shared aesthetic and material expression of the subdued, English Arts and Crafts style for which Smith was best known, sets the tone for Wychwood Park. The natural materials, the emphasis on the picturesque, and the ample usage of earthy tones and broken rooflines, all combine beautifully to allow the effortless transition of home and nature, nature and home. While Smith's early commissions in High Park involved the design of park-adjacent homes in a suburban setting, his creations in Wychwood Park involved the design and careful placement of suburban homes within a park. In Wychwood Park, Smith truly hit his stride, the homes he built there being among the best examples of his work.

"In a cooling bung' location, where no troubling trails intrude": Montreal, Quebec

For the purposes of this study, which necessitated a snapshot of Montreal's urban makeup circa 1900, the traditional east-west divide between the predominantly French-Canadian east side of the city and the relatively more affluent Anglo-Canadian west side, served to inform the search for homes that accorded with Canada's Arts and Crafts milieu. English-inspired Arts and Crafts homes were predominantly built in the

traditionally Anglo-Canadian neighbourhoods of Westmount and Mount Royal, west of the city centre. All but one of the Montreal interviews took place atop Mount Royal, the only exception being a sprawling country estate, perched upon the cliff-side edge of a West Island township. From an ethnographic perspective, the Montreal participants represented the closest approximation to an outlying population, segregated by geography, language, culture, and wealth, from the rest of the city. Already benefiting from a sublime natural setting, the grand estates built upon the mountainside during the early twentieth century provided Canada's leading architects, Nobbs predominant among them, with an idyllic canvas and closed vista upon which to work their craft.

Figure 5.12 38 Chemin Belvédère [1914] in Montreal. Nobbs' family home exhibits the architect's signature blend of Arts and Crafts and Beaux-Arts influences, along with Nobbs' wealth and prestige. Photo captured by the author on July 17, 2013.

Percy Nobbs' family estate, situated at 38 Chemin Belvédère, with its red brick exterior, irregular massing, and entranceway crowned with a leafy, naturalistic bas-relief,

is highly distinctive among the many exquisite mountainside homes. From the outside, the home is striking in appearance from every angle, its Arts and Crafts-inspired picturesqueness framed by a low stone wall, canopy of mature trees, and the magnificent backdrop offered by the sweeping views of the city. Inside, it is clear from the many naturalistic flourishes that Nobbs' enthusiasm for biology – in local flora and fauna – had a significant role within the creation of his signature architectural style and design aesthetic. Built in 1914, Nobbs' home contains many of the same motifs – the leaves, flowers, and acorn-topped newel posts and window pulls – that populate the pages of his 1937 publication, *Design: A Treatise on the Discovery of Form*.

In many ways, this blend of English Arts and Crafts with a subtly-employed French-Canadian romanticism, works particularly well, especially in the context of a home built within a tony English neighbourhood in the heart of Montreal in the francophone province of Quebec. In none other than the Scottish-born Nobbs' Montreal home could one find a room finished with heavy oak shelving, sturdy picture rail, Morris wallpaper, and casement windows, along with a custom-built cupboard housing a collection of prize-winning, Parisian-made foils, épées, and sabres. The centerpiece of Nobbs' home, his oak-lined study and fencing salle, offers the most succinct example of the architect's ability to seamlessly blend cultural and artistic sensibilities, expressed as a new form in an effortless, natural style all his own. With skill, finesse, and a disciplined hand, Nobbs was able to parry and thrust, to expertly hold his own with a variety of artistic styles and influences. Fortunate, as well, to be presented with a series of closed vistas, from McGill to Mount Royal, and elsewhere, Nobbs was able to set the architectural tone of several areas across the city. Thus in his own home high atop the

mountain, no opportunity was lost to demonstrate his vision for Canada's architectural future, along with his adoptive country's as of yet unrealized potential for invention.

Figure 5.13 38 Chemin Belvédère [1914] in Montreal. Beaux-Arts-inspired bas-relief over the front entrance embellished with naturalistic flora. Photo captured by the author on July 17, 2013.

The Nobbs Estate was purchased in 2011 by a Russian-Canadian couple who had been attracted to the home in large part because of the little-known connection between its architect and his early days in St. Petersburg.[48] According to Nobbs' family history, young Percy spent a great deal of his childhood and early architectural education in Russia, owing to the fact that his father worked there as a stock broker during the late nineteenth century.[49] According to Tatiana, a historian and librarian at McGill – Nobbs' professional alma mater – she and her husband, a physicist and alleged perfectionist, had become "completely obsessed" with Nobbs, the man, and the architect.[50] Their obsession had led them not only to their purchase of the Nobbs Estate, but to become self-taught experts on every minute detail of the architect's life and work. Tatiana was proud to describe the countless hours she had spent over the last two years of renovations and

[48] Tatiana, interview by the author, Montreal, QC, July 28, 2013.
[49] Susan Wagg, *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman*, Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982, 1.
[50] Tatiana.

restoration work at McGill's architectural archives, poring over original blueprints and plans, taking in whatever she could of the architect and individual that she and her husband had come to admire.[51] Equipped with a strong veneration for Nobbs and work, Tatiana and her husband had achieved a remarkable, loving restoration of their home, one that had spared no expense in order to pay tribute to the work of their architectural hero.

While hero-worship factored deeply into their decision, the architectural attributes of the home, along with its prime setting, were also listed among the top reasons for the purchase. When asked whether there were any specific architectural features that had attracted them, it was made clear that much about the home's Arts and Crafts layout and design had drawn them in.[52] The abundance of natural light, provided by a generous assortment of leaded glass, casement window bays, allowed the surrounding beauty of the

Figure 5.14 38 Chemin Belvédère [1914] in Montreal. The view from the Nobbs Estate highlights the divide between Mount Royal and the city down below. To the left, the 1906 Charles Sumner House, by Scotch-Canadian architect Robert Findlay can be seen. Photo captured by the author on July 17, 2013.

neighbourhood in, and bathed the home in enough daytime light to forego the use of electricity. The sweeping city vistas, and more immediately, of the turrets, spires, and

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.

leafy gardens of the estates nearby, provided no end of impressive views from nearly every room in the house. The picturesque, whether considered from inside or out, was abundant in great measure, a constant reminder of the architect's studied devotion to the precepts of the Arts and Crafts Movement, and to the principles of complete design.

Beyond the views and the light, Tatiana spoke fondly of the home's history, of its architect, and of the fact that after two years of renovation and restoration, she and her husband had become almost spiritually connected to house and its unique past.[53] Tatiana described how she and her husband's efforts were defined by a strong desire to spare no expense, and in so doing, to respect the historic and architectural integrity of the house.[54] Tatiana employed only the best craftspeople and sourced only the highest quality materials in order to breathe new life into their home. Nondescript, 1970s-era windows were replaced with authentic replicas of the leaded glass originals, herringbone floors were restored with rich hardwoods, and the dilapidated blue slate roof was faithfully rebuilt. Wherever possible, Tatiana's archival sleuthing was put to good use, as when she was able to verify the design and eventual reconstruction of the stone masonry garden wall and gate with a collection of historic drawings.[55] When the herringbone floors of the gentlemen's parlour in the attic could not be salvaged, Tatiana had a section framed for posterity, her sense of responsibility as steward and protector of the home, and of Nobbs' personal and professional legacy, one which was deeply personal.

Since her "Moscow times," Tatiana had harboured a love of old things – including homes, architecture, and craftsmanship – something which she was proud to have been

[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

able to express so completely through her purchase and restoration of the Nobbs Estate.[56] When asked which type of house was the best for a modern family, Tatiana was quick to identify the Arts and Crafts. While modern homes came in a close second, it was, albeit unsurprisingly, the design philosophy behind her own home that she preferred. The perfect balance of functionality and design, of Old World charm and modern-day simplicity, not to mention the fact that hers was none other than the home of Montreal's premiere Arts and Crafts architect, had made Tatiana and her family very happy.[57]

Figure 5.15 3180-82 The Boulevard [1921-25] in Montreal. Part of a series of semi-detached homes built by Nobbs in Mount Royal, the above homes feature a blend of Arts and Crafts elements, including Scottish dormers, mottled brick, and irregular massing. Careful observers will note the small bas-relief placed on the home seen to the left. Photo captured by the author on July 28, 2013.

Nobbs' architectural contribution to Mount Royal can be seen in nearly every corner of the exclusive, hillside neighbourhood. Around the corner from his own home,

[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.

3180-82 The Boulevard share many of the same features. Mottled brick exteriors, irregular massing, and handsome slate roofs align these homes to the English Cottage tradition, albeit with Nobbs' telltale flourishes of Scottish dormers, naturalistic, Beaux-Arts bas-reliefs, and in at least in one example, Québécois-inspired blue wooden shutters. The picturesque is employed to great extent in each, the pleasing frontages and lots framed by breathtaking views of the city skyline. Inside, the familiar reliance on rich, natural wood tones, floral-patterned tile fireplaces, and well-constructed doors, windows, and handcrafted hardware, all point to the work of an architect fully committed to the realms of art, craft, and design. However, though they fall well within the bounds of the Arts and Crafts, there are just enough stylistic cues – a bas-relief here, a bit of Beaux-Arts plaster work there – to hint at the precise location and cultural space that these unique

Figure 5.16 3180-82 The Boulevard [1921-25] in Montreal. 3180 The Boulevard (pictured) features many of the same signature Nobbs motifs, including the aforementioned bas-relief (top-right). Photo captured by the author on July 28, 2013.

homes occupy. The Scottish Arts and Crafts, served *à la Québécoise*, ably represents Nobbs' penchant for invention, for the blending of distinctive architectural traditions that defined his intertwining philosophies of nationalism, modernity, and domestic design.

From my vantage point up on the mountain, looking down over the city, it was easy to feel lost among the switchback roads, hidden laneways, and stone property walls that define the neighbourhood. In the secluded, wealthy, world of Anglophone-dominated Mount Royal, at the city's far western edge, it was as if two very different worlds existed side-by-side. The homes there were by design, almost certainly created for a very specific clientele, poised far above the city in such a way as to guarantee a rare sort of comfortable seclusion. So it was for Dorothy, the owner of another Nobbs-designed home, at 74 Chemin Belvédère, at the end of a cul-de-sac, whose story served to reinforce

Figure 5.17 74 Chemin Belvédère [1926] in Montreal. Designed by Nobbs in the "indigenous" Quebecois style that he had first become fascinated with upon his arrival, the home is composed of heavy-cut stone, punctuated by French dormers, and a Beaux-Arts-inspired portico above the entrance. Photo captured by the author on August 9, 2013.

the feeling of selective seclusion that appears to have resonated here and elsewhere within the purview of this study. While the home's abundance of original charm was high up on the list of favourite features, its location and the seclusion offered by its exclusive address was singled out by Dorothy and her adult-aged daughter.[58] Dorothy viewed the remoteness of her home as having been peaceful, the serenity that came with the home far outweighing any potential inconvenience related to its position high upon the mountain. Dorothy's daughter agreed, the home said to have been an ideal place to grow up, its urban-suburban setting having provided her with the best of both worlds.[59]

Figure 5.18 74 Chemin Belvédère [1926] in Montreal. Known affectionately as the "country home," the attic has served several purposes over its lifetime. More than anything, the space represented a calm retreat from both the city and the rest of the busy household, thus reinforcing the emphasis upon seclusion that permeated the discussions with Dorothy and her neighbours. Photo captured by the author on August 9, 2013.

[58] Dorothy and Ashley, interview by the author, Montreal, QC, August 9, 2013.
[59] Ibid.

Offering an idyllic domestic setting, removed yet in view of the city, these rare survivors of fashionable Canadiana, built by Canadian architects for their Canadian clientele, and crafted out of the same raw materials that had made their fortunes, reflected much of what was once commonly held as the essence of the Canadian experience. These modern, well-appointed homes have survived the last century – one of seemingly unbridled, rapid change – not in spite of the world we now live in, but indeed, because of it. Representing the original, streetcar suburbs of the twentieth century, these homes and neighbourhoods were designed from the start as a part of the City Beautiful movement, which envisaged an idealized urban-suburban life both apart and as a part of the city. Connected by ample streetcar networks, and by the recent advent of the automobile, these neighbourhoods offered those who could afford it the means for an illusory escape from the frenetic pace of the city. The architects of the Arts and Crafts Movement fostered this desire by designing homes that catered to the middle-class dream of living the simple life, while still remaining connected. From the desire for a home that espoused a well-designed, tempered modernity, the architects of the day were able to build-to-order a special, liminal urban-suburban space in North America's largest cities which has continued to hold special meaning among its inhabitants to this day.

Moving on to an even more pronounced example of comfortable seclusion, the J. L. Todd Estate [1911-13] located at 180 Chemin Senneville in the West Island, is one of several impressive Arts and Crafts-inspired homes in the Sennevile Historic District, an area that was designated by Parks Canada as a National Historic Site in 2002.[60] Dr. J. L. Todd [1876-1949], an esteemed Professor of Parasitology at McGill University, was

[60] "Senneville Historic District National Historic Site of Canada," Canada's Historic Places, accessed October 10, 2014, http://www.historicplaces.ca/en/rep-reg/place-lieu.aspx?id=4442

neighbour to some of the most powerful men in Canadian politics and commerce, including Sir John Joseph Caldwell Abbot, Mayor of Montreal and former Prime Minister of Canada; Sir Edward Seaborne Clouston, Manager of the Bank of Montreal; and Louis-Joseph Forget, Chairman of the Montreal Stock Market, President of the Montreal Street Railway, Board Member of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and Conservative Senator.[61] In many ways, this small, remote, community of elites existed as a microcosm of the inner-city metropolitan enclaves of Mount Royal and Westmount. A mix of English- and French-Canadian elite, the wealthy families of the secluded, picturesque, West Island townships commissioned only the best architects and landscapers of their day, such as renowned Montreal architect Robert Findlay [1859-1951] and American landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead [1822-1903] of Central Park fame.[62] Considering the pedigree of the area, the success of the J. L. Todd Estate necessitated that Nobbs make this among his best work. To this end, it can be argued that Nobbs succeeded in building one of the finest private residences of his career.

The J. L. Todd Estate sits on an impressive multi-hectare parcel of land complete with a separate coach house, gazebo, tennis court, and private waterfront access. Composed of heavy, rough-cut stone, and topped with a weathered, cedar shingle roof, the house takes on a particularly grey, monolithic appearance upon first approach, the long, winding gravel driveway directing all visitors to the rear of the home. Once circumnavigated, it is evident that a deliberately loose symmetry frames the exterior, the home's partitioning into three balanced sections – each defined by a chimney stack and pairs of matching windows on each end – mated to the more whimsical Arts and Crafts

[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.

touches, such as the irregular massing and the use of natural materials. The front of the home, facing the water, is more formal in appearance, the symmetry and balance of design elements, including its many windows, chimneys, and dormers, by far the most pronounced here than from any other vantage. Undoubtedly the site of many high society luncheons and soirées, the front was designed with the more traditional elegance of the day in mind, while the back took on a more comfortable, almost Collegiate Gothic appearance that was more befitting the esteemed man of letters who made it his home.

Figure 5.19 180 Chemin Senneville [1911-13] in Senneville, QC. The impressive J. L. Todd Estate is truly a sight to behold. Captured from the rear, the long approach to the home reveals an Arts and Crafts-inspired chateau worthy of its picturesque setting. Photo captured by the author on July 20, 2013.

Once again, a mixture of Scottish, French, and French-Canadian design elements have been integrated by Nobbs into the predominantly Arts and Crafts-inspired exterior. The obvious deference to symmetry, especially in the front of the home, bring to mind the country estates and chateaus of France, while the Scottish dormers serve as a

reminder of the architect's homeland. From the irregular massing, to the heavy reliance upon natural materials, and the incorporation of several large, open air dining and sleeping porches, it is clear that the dominant design features of the home were informed by the Arts and Crafts. The cultural blending of design elements is pleasing overall, there being only a small handful of ways in which the purity of the Arts and Crafts philosophy

Figure 5.20 180 Chemin Senneville [1911-13] in Senneville, QC. The front of the home features a great deal of symmetry in defiance of the Craft Movement's preference for organic shapes and irregular massing. The Scottish dormers serve as a reminder of the architect's roots. Photo captured by the author on July 20, 2013.

was potentially subverted as per the discretion of either Nobbs or his client. The false buttresses that appear to support the otherwise elegant car port, and the deceptively stable-like appearance of the automobile garage and coach house, are both contradictory to the Movement's ideals regarding transparent design, along with its strong aversion to visual deception. For while creative license was generally up to the discretion of the

architect, such transgressions would have likely caused more than mild grumblings among Arts and Crafts purists such as Eden Smith and the members of the Eighteen Club.

Figure 5.21 180 Chemin Senneville [1911-13] in Senneville, QC. The oval-shaped dining room adds a distinctly Continental character to the otherwise Arts-and-Crafts-inspired home. Photo captured by the author on July 20, 2013.

The interior spaces of the J. L. Todd Estate, which retain, along with the exterior, much of their original detail, reveal an even more complex blending of French and British design elements. The showpiece, oval-shaped dining room, virtually untouched since its creation, with its beautifully crafted, white, paneled walls, decorative plasterwork, and its graceful, curved windows, fireplace, built-ins, and French doors, evokes a feeling of splendour usually reserved for the manor houses of Europe. In many ways, the inclusion of such an overtly Continental space, especially one so central to the function and aesthetic of a home, appears contradictory to the design palette of an

architect renowned for his contributions to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. However, as an admirer and practitioner of both the Beaux-Arts and the Arts and Crafts, Nobbs was uniquely able to reconcile these two opposing disciplines – all in the pursuit of invention. Elsewhere, the presence of the Arts and Crafts is much more evident. The fireplaces, decorated with Morris-patterned tiles, the oak paneling of the master staircase, and the numerous banks of well-crafted casement windows outfitted with their sturdy hardware, all serve to remind the observer that at its heart, the home is a product of the Craft Movement, albeit one modified by a deep-seated belief in the power of invention.

"There's a jingle in the jungle": Victoria, British Columbia

The capital of British Columbia holds a special, uniquely dualistic place in the minds of many Canadians. On the surface, the city can be seen as a symbol of the nation's British heritage, with its offerings of high tea, double-decker buses, and tourist shops selling miniature Union Jacks and Royalty-themed dishware. Taking a step back, however, the city, and indeed the entire coastal area encompassing Victoria and Vancouver, with their gentle climate, lush temperate rainforests, and mountain vistas, combine to create a common understanding among locals that "this is not Canada."[63] With more geographically in common with Seattle or Portland than Toronto or Montreal, Canada's southern Pacific Coast represents the country's most hospital climate. Over on the mainland, Vancouver's unique positioning has manifested itself in other ways, the downtown peninsula representing the heart of urban Canada's most progressive politics, green initiatives, and urban planning. "Vancouverism," a term coined in recent decades by urban theorists, has become understood internationally to describe a special type of

[63] Steve Burgess, "Vancouver is not really Canada," *The 180 with Jim Brown*, CBC Radio Online, February 26, 2015, http://www.cbc.ca/radio/the180/boarding-school-response-when-isis-recruits-return-balanced-budgets-1.2970456/vancouver-is-not-really-canada-1.2974576

urban planning that focuses primarily upon density, mixed use development, green spaces, and innovation, tools which have made its namesake city one of the most liveable in the world.[64] Back in Victoria, however, with a population of only eighty thousand, progress in terms of urban development has been much slower. For the purposes of this study, the relative slow pace of urban renewal, and the fact that the old neighbourhoods and inner suburbs have remained largely intact, made Victoria, where Samuel Maclure practiced his trade throughout his heyday, a prime place to start.

Maclure won numerous commissions for private homes of extraordinary quality along the winding, rolling, suburbs of Greater Victoria that line the rocky coastline, with concentrations of his work found along the wealthy enclaves of Rockland Avenue and Foul Bay Road. Composed of natural materials, and sharing the architect's love of the Tudor Revival blended with an inventive West Coast Craftsman aesthetic, these homes sit well upon their expansive, rocky, wooded lots. Often just barely visible through a canopy of lush greenery, the grandest among Maclure's many great estates were tamed only through the subtle, deliberate application of sound Arts and Crafts principles of scale, proportion, and simplicity. The overall effect was a strikingly successful blending of architectural elements brought seamlessly together in order to achieve one of the most important goals of the Arts and Crafts philosophy, that of the picturesque, which, within such a distinctive natural setting, truly set these homes apart.

Further towards the city centre, Maclure's more modest commissions provide a glimpse of the architect's most popular domestic forms, as built in much greater numbers

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[64] "Vancouver is the world's most liveable city for a fifth straight year: survey," *The National Post*, February 22, 2011, http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/vancouver-is-the-worlds-most-livable-city-for-a-fifth-straight-year-survey

for Victoria's middle class. No less striking, these homes often feature many, if not all of the architect's signature touches, albeit on a smaller scale. One excellent example of such

Figure 5.22 941 Meares St [1913] in Victoria. A modest home by Maclure standards, this downtown residence incorporates nearly all of his signature design cues, including Maclure finials, vertical half-timbering, cedar shingles, hand-painted floral rosettes by Daisy Maclure, and a fanciful name. Photo captured by the author on July 19, 2012.

a home can be found within a five minute walk of downtown – a charming Craftsman bungalow located at 941 Meares Street. Named "Dalhousie" in typical Maclure fashion, the Meares Street home is picture-perfect. Painted in warm, earthy tones, the wooden, cedar-shingled exterior of the home built in 1913 sits nearly hidden from the street, its leafy downtown lot allowing for the same picturesqueness afforded its larger, inner suburban contemporaries. The house retains nearly all of its original details, including a tell-tale Maclure finial, Tudor-style gable, and at least a dozen hand-painted leaded glass windows. Painted by Maclure's wife Daisy, an accomplished artist, and sometimes

contributor to her husband's work, the small, hand-painted rosettes, each depicting a different native flower, serve as a delightful, uniquely personal addition to the home.

Figure 5.23 941 Meares St [1913] in Victoria. One of several hand-painted rosettes created by Daisy Maclure. Each one representing a different native flower, the naturalistic, personal touch falls well within the purview of the Arts and Crafts. Photo captured by the author on July 19, 2012.

The interior showcases the extent to which a thoughtful, well-executed design set the tone for the construction of the house. Tell-tale Arts and Crafts features abound, including the built-in bookshelves, pleasing room proportionality, and emphasis upon natural materials. Articulated, wall-mounted reading lamps in the sitting room, and the additional soft natural light provided by the strategically placed windows, help create a sense that one could easily pass the time by the fireplace with a good book. Complete design is found throughout the home, the picture rail, built-in seating, and the miniature, detachable greenhouse box that was constructed to fit over an exterior window in the kitchen, combining to ensure that this was truly a home to be lived in and enjoyed.

Located around the corner from the Meares Street home, the 1904 Cecil Roberts House at 913 Burdett Avenue, until recently owned by the Sisters of St Anne, harboured a fascinating, revelatory tale about local history and the various interpretations of

architectural heritage.[65] The first interview of this study took place with a retired, but energetic Sister, whose participation in this process turned out to be an eye-opening experience, one which in many ways helped to contextualize all that followed. Situated next to the Sisters' nineteenth-century convent, the charming, yet unassuming Maclure cottage abutting the property came into the Sisters' hands in the early 1960s, with an aim towards demolishing it to make way for a planned addition. Over the years, however, the house became a retirement home for the elder nuns, who three at a time, were able to live in the by then tri-plexed home close to their peers. This arrangement lasted until the mid-1970s, when plans to demolish the home resurfaced. Enter Sister Frieda, and what became one of the earliest, and hardest-fought heritage battles in Victoria's history.

In 1976, at a time when concerns over preservation and heritage were first coming to the forefront, a young academic at the University of Victoria, Martin Segger, who has since written extensively on Samuel Maclure, and Victoria's built heritage, became involved after learning of the potential demolition one of Maclure's homes. Welcomed under the pretence that the young man from the university simply wanted to take a few pictures of the old home for posterity's sake, the nuns agreed to his requests, and believed that once he had left, that would be the end of it.[66] Not long after, however, the photos made their way to the fledging Victoria Heritage Foundation, and soon the press, historians, and even the mayor, had poked their noses into the cloistered confines of the Sisters of St. Anne. Once the story broke, it was only a matter of time before the nuns were forced to abandon their plans to knock down the house and expand their convent.

[65] Sister Frieda, interview by the author, Victoria, BC, July 18, 2012.
[66] Ibid.

The battle between the long-established Sisters of St. Anne and relatively less-established Maclure home that sat in their way, serves as a reminder that despite the aesthetic historicism with which the homes of the Canadian Arts and Crafts were designed, their cultural capital is confined to a specific flashpoint in the nation's history. For while heritage enthusiasts bemoan the lack of protections for historic homes – the *Globe and Mail* reported on March, 2015, that an average of three Arts and Crafts homes per day are being demolished in Vancouver[67] – it is sometimes, albeit rarely, the case that these purported architectural transgressions have their origins in something much more complex. The early-twentieth century homes of the Arts and Crafts era, like the grand Victorian domiciles that preceded them, were nothing more than constructs of an idealized world that served the tastes and sensibilities of the time to which they belong. For the Sisters of St. Anne, just as for the heritage activists who saw fit to get involved, the history, and what can be considered the living heritage, of both the convent and Maclure cottage next door, highlight this fact. Though the Arts and Crafts philosophy of design was in practice one that celebrated traditional craftsmanship, and took stock of a certain degree of studied historicism, its products, despite all appearances to the contrary, were once new and modern, a replacement for what had come before.

In the end, though it was clear that even after forty years that the complicated history of the home still roused strong feelings, Sister Frieda had softened in her later years towards the house. She openly described the home as, "charming," and "lovely," and indicated that she would not leave it until, as she put it, "you know..."[68] These select

[67] Kerry Gold, "In Vancouver, young people are fleeing the lush west side." *The Globe and Mail*, March 20, 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/home-and-garden/real-estate/in-vancouver-young-people-are-fleeing-the-lush-west-side/article23555084/
[68] Sister Frieda.

few words of praise were punctuated by a long afternoon that included an opportunity visit the nuns' archives and pore over newspaper clippings from their public battle with the heritage boosters, but only after Sister Frieda was content that I understood her story and point of view. Though differing from any initial expectations, and perhaps relatively light in details as to the home's architectural history, Sister Frieda's tale was one that has remained with the author to this day, and has more than earned its place in this study.

Figure 5.24 913 Burdett Ave. [1904] in Victoria. Sister Frieda stands proudly outside of the home she and the Sisters of St. Anne once tried to have demolished. Credited by many as the birthplace of the Victoria Heritage Foundation, the home stands today as a testament to changing attitudes towards preservation. Photo captured by the author on July

Further out, but not yet at the more fashionable, inner-suburban coastline, a small collection of Maclure homes sit along Saint Charles Street several blocks north of the city centre. Built primarily for the prominent Todd family at the start of the twentieth century, the row of Maclure-designed estates strike an impressive character. The effect is made all

the greater owing to the fact that only one of these has been significantly altered, thereby leaving the streetscape relatively unscathed. The Saint Charles Street pocket reflects well upon Maclure, his vision for a coherent design scheme, and a decidedly nature-inspired aesthetic, one that a century onward, has continued to thrive.

Figure 5.25 1041 Saint Charles St. [1907] in Victoria. Designated "Illahie," the Charles & Louisa Todd estate is the largest built by Maclure for the family. The estate features a blend of his signature design cues, including finials, Tudor half-timbering, and a heavy reliance upon natural materials. Photo captured by the author on July 21,

Tucked into this impressive row of Maclure estates, quite arguably the most magnificent, and certainly the most lovingly restored home visited during this study, sits at 943 Saint Charles Street. Built by Maclure in 1912 for the wealthy Beasley Family, Brian and Karen's home easily stands out from the rest. The Beasley Estate was built largely in the tradition of the Prairie School as championed by Frank Lloyd Wright, and

rests in a more or less “Four Square” configuration. This arrangement gives the home a stately appearance, one that is amplified both by its striking exterior details, and the meticulously manicured front gate and stone wall that encircles its generous corner lot. The stark, vertically inclined, black-and-white half-timbering along the upper level features one of Maclure’s trademark finishes, which contrasts with the more subdued full stucco main floor treatment, before meeting the ground level with an exterior encased in a random, river stone masonry. Topped with a broad, relatively flat, horizontal roofline, the home, despite owing several visual cues to the Prairie School, retains more than enough distinctive personalized aesthetic notes to identify it as a Maclure home.

Figure 5.26 943 Saint Charles St. [1912] in Victoria. The Beasley Estate is one of the best-preserved Maclure homes in Victoria. The award-winning restoration spotlighted every detail of the architect’s creative vision. Photo captured by the author on July 21, 2012.

While the outside of the home had been meticulously restored by the owners, the interior demonstrated a level of attention to detail rivalling a museum. Once inside the solid oak front door, visitors were met with a gleaming entryway and central hall that from top-to-bottom was a testament to a standard of perfectionism consistent throughout the house. Every section of Douglas Fir mouldings, trim, and wall panelling, as well as every bit of tile and slate to be found within every inglenook and cranny of the home were done to perfection. Going further still, the homeowners had restored the house to its original floor plan – the home having been duplexed in 1947 – and in the process had opted to rebuild every detail just as it had been in 1912, right down to the extraneous maid's staircase and quarters complete with drop down ironing board.[69] If ever an homage to the Arts and Crafts philosophy of "complete design" had been studied and executed to its fullest potential, Brian and Karen's efforts had succeeded.

In meeting with Brian and Karen and viewing their beautifully restored home, it quickly became evident, as would sporadically be the case in Toronto and Montreal, that my hosts represented the closest, modern-day approximation of Arts and Crafts purists. The Maycocks' considerable funds, along with their indomitable enthusiasm for their home, its architect, and its exquisite materiality and craftsmanship, had united in such a way that allowed them to fill this role. Thus, while a more cynical approach, akin to what Lears wrote on the subject of elitism within the Arts and Crafts[70] could argue away their supposed dedication to authenticity, the Maycocks' devotion to their home, and to its historic, architectural integrity, make them ideal candidates for this admittedly complex

[69] Brian and Karen Maycock, interview by the author, Victoria, BC, July 21, 2012.
[70] T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon, 1981). 68.

Figure 5.27 943 Saint Charles St. [1912] in Victoria. Every square inch of the home, from the wood panelling, to the stained glass windows, to the beautiful built-in oak furniture, were all painstakingly restored by the Maycocks, their many heritage awards seen proudly on display (right). Photo captured by the author on July 21, 2012.

designation. Modern-day, Arts and Crafts "true believers" if ever such a characterization could exist, the Maycocks had lived and breathed the restoration of every minute detail of their home for the better part of a decade. With their determination to use only the best, most authentic materials, and to employ none but the most skilled, traditionally-trained craftspeople they could find – and only when their own considerable abilities met their limits – the Maycocks represented a rare breed of Arts and Crafts enthusiasts. Philosophically as well, the Maycocks shared a deep-rooted respect for the guiding principles of the Arts and Crafts, and were well-versed in its teachings. In essence, the Maycocks had become very closely connected to Maclure, having spent ten years familiarizing themselves with every inch of their three thousand square-foot home.

Figure 5.28 943 Saint Charles St. [1912] in Victoria. Evocative of the Prairie Style that had enthralled Maclure as a young man, the Beasley Estate showcases a masterful blend of West Coast Arts and Crafts and Prairie School design cues. These include the home's wide stance and horizontality, the latter broken up by the architect's trademark vertical half-timbering. Photo captured by the author on July 21, 2012.

According to the Maycocks, they had been fortunate that "the house had found them."[71] Adding to their sense of destiny, craftspeople had materialized by chance, and as according to Karen, the solution to niggling problems such as an elusive formula for a traditional, all but forgotten type of stain, came from a discarded magazine left behind on an airplane.[72] In this respect, the Maycocks' experiences were highly analogous to those of Tatiana and her husband in Montreal. After ten years, and more than a million dollars of work, the house had garnered the acclaim of the Victoria Heritage Foundation – having won "Home of the Year" in 2009 – and remains a highlight of the same Arts and

[71] Brian and Karen Maycock.
[72] Ibid.

Crafts walking tour that prompted the Maycocks' original purchase.[73] It was thus with a mix of surprise and concern for the home's future, when it was revealed towards the end of the interview that it had been sold earlier that day to a thirty-year-old, tech millionaire with a yearning for a "cool place" to call home.[74] Having done their best to preserve a significant piece of Maclure's legacy, the Maycocks had come to the end of their journey.

The first leg of the fieldwork began nearly as unexpectedly as it had finished. Though in the end it would prove difficult to repeat the extraordinary discovery made in Sister Frieda, or the considerable enthusiasm of Brian and Karen, the homes and homeowners encountered in Victoria painted a unique picture of the city. By and large the participants were people who loved their homes. Additionally, and of great significance to this study, it appeared to be the case that more than just wanting an old, "character" home, many of the owners had specifically sought out their Arts and Crafts homes for their unique style and design attributes. When questioned on the motives behind their purchase, "simplicity," "craftsmanship," "natural materials," and "open living spaces" came up time and time again. The desire to own a Maclure home, and in particular, one that could be restored, maintained, and saved from a fate unknown was often cited alongside other rationales for having bought this or that specific house. When questioned on the possibility of a sense of stewardship or public responsibility towards their historic homes, homeowners were often highly forthcoming about the pride and sense of civic duty they felt about the preservation of their homes for future generations.

The spectre of nearby Vancouver loomed large over the conversations with the Victoria participants, especially when the topic of heritage arose. Whether it can be

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[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.

attributed to sheer proximity, or to local boosterism, it was repeatedly made clear that the level of respect for the abundant stock of Arts and Crafts homes in Victoria was much more positive than in the significantly more frenzied Vancouver real estate market. While the traditional housing stock of each city is nearly identical, and in many cases entire blocks or neighbourhoods were dramatically shaped by architects such as Maclure, the approach to heritage in recent years has been markedly different. Booming house prices have positioned Vancouver as the most lucrative real estate market in the country, one which has been fuelled in large part by speculators, foreign investors, and upper-middle-class Canadians looking for a vibrant city life and gentle climate. Smaller, isolated, and more socially insular, Victoria has escaped many of the pressures that have led to the large scale demolition and rebuilding of Vancouver's traditional housing stock. This has, as an unintended consequence of the Vancouver real estate boom, solidified the notion that in Victoria, its historic character homes – built mostly in the West Coast-infused, Canadian Arts and Crafts style – are those which now more than ever set the city apart.

When the SPAB was founded by William Morris and Philip Webb in 1877, one of its key goals was to push for the reparation and restoration of historic buildings instead of the much more popular "modernization" craze of the nineteenth century. In Morris' view, the cultural heritage value of ancient buildings in his native Britain was of paramount importance to honour and save for the next generation. This feeling of national pride and physical stewardship of the country's historic monuments and buildings is a phenomenon that has survived today, as evidenced by the creation of the countless "Heritage" foundations that have cropped up around the world since. In many ways, the aims of the Victoria Heritage Foundation, one of the most publicly visible, and best-supported in

Canada, echo those laid out by the SPAB. What began as a trickle of public outcry a generation ago, such as that witnessed in the showdown of the Sisters of St Anne versus City Hall, has multiplied today into a torrent of civic outrage that flows anew with every demolition permit granted in Vancouver's West End. With every historic home, church, and factory that comes down, the pressure to save what remains grows ever stronger. Civic boundaries appear to only further galvanize those at the centre of the debate, those within it keen to ensure that what has happened *there* can not be allowed to happen *here*.

In terms of architectural identity, the lines initially set out by those who designed the buildings in question, as well as those who now seek to preserve them, have become ideologically bound together. Just as the first generation of professional architects in Canada struggled to cobble together a national identity through their trade, and to thus simultaneously promote and protect their fledging profession in a blanket of nationalism and nation-building, the heritage activists of today seek to preserve the buildings of the past by evoking many of the same sentiments and symbols. Preservationist battles of the last half-century have been fought with familiar slogans, as heritage advocates have implored those in power to "save our history" and have rallied against those who would "tear down a piece our past." Unique to the desire to save an old church, rail station, or city hall, the fight to preserve Canada's historic housing stock has by definition a much more personal bent to it, perhaps owing in large part to its relatively smaller, human scale. Though it is by no means a prerequisite that a threatened heritage home retain any ties to the Arts and Crafts – most in Canada do not – it must be noted that when such a structure is involved, its destruction cuts deep, its removal synonymous with the piecemeal erasure of one of the most expressive forms of Canada's domestic revival and

early twentieth-century character. It is the explicit contention of this study that this fact is seldom lost among those who fight for the preservation of these homes from coast-to-coast. With each English Cottage and Craftsman bungalow that falls in Toronto, Montreal, or Vancouver, a piece of what makes these cities what they are, and have for a century been, disappears forever.

Conclusion

After more than two dozen interviews, spread across three provinces, two summers, several hours of audio recordings, and hundreds of photographs, the fieldwork portion of this study came to an end. The search for the cultural legacy left behind by the Canadian Craft ideal, collected from one neighbourhood to the next, house by house, story after story, resulted in a stockpile of information that took several weeks to unpack and reorganize into cogent hypotheses and conclusions. The original aim of the fieldwork was threefold; to document and assess the current status of several prime examples of Canadian Arts and Crafts homes across the country, to measure the modern-day reverence for the Movement's many precepts, including those of authenticity, craftsmanship, and traditional materials among participants, and to probe the existence of a tangible, Arts and Crafts legacy. To these ends, it can be stated in brief prior to a further explanation, that to varying degrees, the findings from the fieldwork research came back in the affirmative, the hypotheses posed returning results that bore conclusions in support of their original aims. It is thus the contention of this study that the essence of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement has survived the past century, living on as a subtle, yet expressive force which has continued to shape the ways in which many Canadians continue to construct, live, and interact with domestic and public space.

Within the realm of domestic architecture especially, the importance of design, function, craftsmanship, materiality, and the connection to a shared national style and building tradition can be felt strongest of all, expressed as it was through the construction and subsequent survival of tens of thousands of Arts and Crafts homes across country. Though Canada's Arts and Crafts legacy lives primarily through the efforts of people such as Brian and Karen, or Tatiana, there are many other avenues through which its ideals continue to inspire. While the aforementioned cherish their homes for all they represent, and can be said to have fully embraced the Craft ideal, there were many others who fell elsewhere along the spectrum, whose ongoing contribution to the Movement's future cannot be ignored. In the case of the W.H Reid House, from which a direct line of artistic inspiration can be traced from Eden Smith through three generations of the Reid family, it is clear that the enduring ability of the Craft ideal to inspire has survived for over a century. For the modern-day descendants – both spiritual and familial – of the early adherents to the philosophical principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement, their shared reverence for what they perceive to be their homes' authenticity, and material and aesthetic quality, places them as a group within the same ideological category as their predecessors. Members to some of the same exclusive clubs or affiliations to which their early twentieth-century counterparts were founders – the Arts and Letters Club being a common tie among the Toronto participants, for example – many of the participants belonged to the same social circles as those who originally built and commissioned their homes. Bound together by a host of cultural cues, from their choice of address, style of home, likely ties to alumnae, society clubs, and otherwise close-knit communities of like-

minded individuals, many of the participants appeared to fit the mould of Bricker and Ibbitson's Laurentian Elite model which owes its origins to the turn of the last century.

When *Maclean's* wrote in 1964, of the subject of its somewhat tongue-in-cheek article, "Glory Be, The Whitepainters are Coming!," namely, the, "whitepainter [,] (statistically) [...] a man who has 2.3 children, an $18,000 mortgage on an old house downtown, and enough pastel paint to cover all the red brick that's left after he's knocked off the porch, hung the coach lamp and paved the lawn,"[75] Harry Bruce had identified the first wave of what would come to be known as gentrification. Many participants within this study could be said to belong to tail end of this group, to the latter stages of the modern urban renaissance, and of the associated restoration and subsequent gentrification of turn of the century homes and neighbourhoods into vibrant, desirable spaces. "Whitepainters" by association, many participants declared a clear affinity for urban living, albeit of the particular, turn of the century variety to which they had found themselves, whereby a comfortable home, close to the city centre could be had within the parameters of a middle-class lifestyle. Born at the right time, many of the participants belonged to the Baby Boom generation, their relative middle-class affluence, professional lives, and status as homeowners within desirable downtown neighbourhoods, linking them further still to one another along generational, cultural lines.[76]

Central to their relationship with their homes, however, the main commonality between participants with regard to their stated affection and reverence for their historic, Arts and Crafts houses, was that they sincerely seemed to believe in the essential quality, both aesthetic and philosophical, of their hand-crafted, locally-made homes. Astutely

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[75] Harry Bruce, "Glory Be, The Whitepainters are Coming!," *Maclean's*, April 18, 1964, 25.
[76] For more on the Baby Boom generation in Canada, see: Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

aware of what their houses represented, the majority of participants held highly personalized feelings towards heritage, especially to the battles currently being fought on much smaller fronts, amid countless historic neighbourhoods and heritage districts across the country. For Terry Ryan and Gail Reid in Toronto, Tatiana and her husband in Montreal, Sister Frieda, and Brian and Karen in Victoria, theirs was a relationship between home and homeowner that went far beyond simple comfort or convenience. The benefits of open plan living and complete design, as found within most Arts and Crafts homes, was frequently mentioned as being significantly responsible for their original and continued affection for their homes. For though the majority of respondents reported the usual list of updates – a powder room here, a new kitchen there – by and large, their homes' footprints and layouts had survived more or less in original condition. Lacking the cumbersome warren of heat-retaining hallways and tiny rooms common to their Victorian predecessors, the houses of the early twentieth century were equipped with enough modern conveniences to allow architects the freedom to build with an eye towards comfort, form, and function. This, combined with the Craft ideal's aim of bringing the outdoors in via an abundance of natural light, and a penchant for beautifully-crafted material details, resulted more often than not with a home able to satisfy multiple generations of homeowner from the turn of the last century to the present.

Around the kitchen and coffee tables of numerous hosts, and from the inglenooks and sleeping porches of Arts and Crafts homes from Toronto, to Montreal, to Victoria, the people encountered along the way came in many forms, each representative of a different expression of the original Craft ideal. Comprised of an array of middle-class Canadians of varying means and origins, the participants, whether representative of

generational wealth or new money, creative types or professionals, or perhaps none of the above, there remained a common thread that wove their stories together. The Craft ideal, whether writ large or small, was present among each participant, its expression manifested through a variety of means from one homeowner to the next. For those such as Gail, Tatiana, and Brian and Karen, whose lives had been deeply touched by the founding principles of the Arts and Crafts Movement, and deeper still by the architects and homes that had by extension done much to nurture their connection to the Craft ideal, theirs remains a unique experience. For others, such as Terry and Dorothy, whose homes had become a source of creative expression and comfortable solitude, the Craft ideal had come perhaps more gently, albeit no less significantly than it had to their more actively inspired peers. No less importantly, the experiences of Sister Frieda, and of her fascinating brush with the fledgling heritage movement, and her late in life appreciation for the architectural merits of her Arts and Crafts bungalow, speak to the ability of the Craft ideal to capture the imagination, and shape the way we live and interact with domestic space. Bound by a common underlying antimodernist bent – thus paradoxically urban, progressive, and creative, yet grounded in a firm belief in tradition, and antipathy towards change – today's craft idealists represent the closest approximation to a modern expression and legacy of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement. The Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, and the domestic revival to which it is tied, has survived the last century, its evolution from one generation to the next having only served to strengthen its impact upon the cultural landscape of Canada's urban, domestic spaces.

Conclusion:

There and Back Again: The Canadian Craft Ideal Comes Full Circle

In the City of Toronto Archives, there is an arresting, early twentieth-century image of Palmerston Boulevard which in its frank, unassuming simplicity, manages to tell the story of the city with a single shot. Dating from 1908, the photograph captures a pleasant street scene, depicting a freshly-built row of stately, Edwardian-era homes, each designed according to plan. Gracefully set back from the street, itself wider than most,[1] and featuring a predetermined array of irregular massing and individualized facades, the homes are uniform in height and scale. Their subtle architectural similarities are hidden from first glance by the studied randomness inherent in their design. For unlike their Victorian ancestors, the plentiful, identical row houses that define much of the Old City of Toronto, these homes were the future, a marker of modernity, status, and good taste.

Figure 6.1 South on Palmerston Boulevard from Harbord Street [1908]. Captured just prior to the installation of the lampposts, the image depicts the homes as they first appeared. Courtesy the City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 7200.

[1] Christopher Hume, "10 of Toronto's best streets to live on," *The Toronto Star*, June 29, 2009, http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2009/06/29/10_of_torontos_best_streets_to_live_on.html

Located in west-end Toronto, Palmerston Boulevard remains one of only two streets in the city to retain its globular street lamps, which along with a canopy of mature trees, provide it with a distinctive character and historic charm. Named on numerous "best of" lists, including references in *blogTO*,[2] *Torontoist*,[3] and an honourable mention from the *Toronto Star*'s architecture critic, Christopher Hume,[4] Palmerston Boulevard, which runs north-south from Bloor to College Street, and is book-ended by a set of stone gates, remains the centrepiece of Seaton Village. Taken together, the stately, cohesively-designed homes, set back and raised high upon their oversized lots, make Palmerston Boulevard a symbol of the high-minded, civic-consciousness of Edwardian Toronto.

According to a detailed, 1982 street study by Brown and Storey Architects, "The uniqueness of Palmerston Boulevard's built form emerges from a multiplication and repetition of simple principles that unite and give individuality to the houses."[5] This carefully constructed randomness, especially with regard to the select duplication of architectural themes and design elements is evident upon close inspection, the same gable, dormer, or bay window found in repetition here and there along the boulevard's five residential blocks. Far from being an indication of corporate carelessness, or the result of a calculated, cost-saving measure, the subtlety with which the architectural duplication occurs was all part of a larger plan, and of a conscious effort towards the precepts of complete design. Well understood by the architects of the day who were familiar with the City Beautiful movement, and the domestic revival of the early

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[2] Derek Flack, "A few of my favourite Toronto streets," *blogTO*, November 1, 2010, http://www.blogto.com/city/2010/11/a_few_of_my_favourite_toronto_streets/
[3] Kevin Plummer, "Historicist: Palmerston Boulevard," *Torontoist*, April 26, 2008, http://torontoist.com/2008/04/historicist_pal/
[4] Hume, "10 of Toronto's best streets to live on."
[5] E. K. Storey and James K. Brown, *Palmerston Boulevard: An Evaluation of a Unique Residential Street* (Toronto: Brown and Storey Architects, 1982), 96.

twentieth century, the application of complete design to Palmerston Boulevard serves to place it firmly within the realm of the Arts and Crafts. Beyond the thematic design cues, studied historicism, and use of natural materials, there remains ample evidence of that intangible, uniting force – that "English something" of Smith's estimation – which serves to underscore its distinctive character.

In terms of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, there are several lessons to be taken away from this example which provide valuable clues about the trajectory of the urban, domestic Craft ideal as captured at a critical moment in its history. In its infancy, Palmerston Boulevard represented the physical manifestation of the architectural, Arts and Crafts-influenced notion of complete design then en vogue, working in tandem within the larger, well-established principles of the City Beautiful. Architecturally, the homes exhibit several traits linked to the Arts and Crafts, with evidence of hipped roofs, cedar shingled gables, exposed beams and brackets, stone foundations, leaded glass casement windows, and more than a few sleeping and dining porches between them. Along the boulevard, several homes can categorically be labelled "Arts and Crafts," along with at least one instance of the period-specific clinker brick, a tell-tale sign of the Movement. From their slate-covered peaks, to their stone foundations, the homes of Palmerston Boulevard seem picture-perfect, as if taken from the pages of a catalogue – which though not the case here, was soon the norm for the countless neighbourhoods of this vintage and character found across the continent.

To this end, Palmerston Boulevard, similar to parts of High Park, Forest Hill, Rosedale, Lawrence Park, Baby Point, and Wychwood Park, can be seen as both a high-water mark for the sort of small scale urban planning common to Canadian cities, as well

as for the gradual transformation of the Arts and Crafts from a "M"ovement to a style. This rapid transformation was largely facilitated by the twin forces of commercialization and mass production, the rampant popularity of the Arts and Crafts among middle-class Canadians turning the Craft ideal into a victim of its own success. Marketed in the years up to and following the First World War in countless catalogues, magazines, and newspaper ads, the commodification of the Arts and Crafts Movement moved quickly, rapidly diluting its once proud traditions and craft idealism into a series of slogans and repeatable patterns. Before long, the Movement's most easily identifiable call signs – "Tudor Revival," "English Cottage," "Craftsman," and "California Bungalow" – were commercially categorized into trivial, anonymous styles, located alphabetically between the pages of a catalogue. Thus, as editor of *Canadian Homes and Gardens* lamented in 1930, it was only a matter of time before architects would become beholden to the whims of a new generation of clients, one which had grown up believing that design, style, and taste were but mere frivolities. Of "[t]he Vancouver or Winnipeg client who insists on having a house with an exterior like one he saw in Montreal with a plan entirely different, possibly cut from a magazine published in Texas," Hodgins urged caution, they being "a most serious case... requir[ing] special treatment and careful nursing."[6]

Having begun in Britain as a creative salve to the perceived ills of industrialization, mechanized labour, and the subsequent deskilling of craftspeople and loss of the nation's craft traditions, the Arts and Crafts Movement had been at its a heart an ideology that resonated clearest to those with a predilection for fantasy. Whether manifested via the construction of an imagined medieval past in which the Guilds were

[6] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens: First Book of Houses* (Toronto: MacLean Publishing Company, Limited, 1930), 48.

alive and well, and a skilled craftsperson could earn a living spent in the pursuit of beauty and honesty through art, or captured in the early efforts at architectural preservation, the Movement in its purest form was highly aspirational. Thus, as witnessed by its rapid devolution from a high-minded philosophical Movement, to little more than style, much of the original essence and transformative power of the Arts and Crafts was snuffed out in the space of a single generation. First in the United States, and then at a more gradual pace in Canada, the Movement's rise to popularity ultimately proved to be its undoing. Nevertheless, the Movement's cultural reach in Canada, as has been demonstrated, was stronger than that of its American counterpart, touching nearly every facet of middle-class, domestic, English-Canadian life. Shaping the architectural character of countless homes and neighbourhoods, and at the root of the formation of the Group of Seven, as well as the deep cultural ties that bound together the nation's English-Canadian cultural elite, the Movement was arguably integral to Canada's cultural coming of age.

Nonetheless, it cannot be forgotten that the Movement was introduced into Canada's fledging architectural profession at a time when the perceived need for a strong, nationalistic, building tradition was at its peak. Perfectly timed, the arrival of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was of critical importance not only to the members of the architectural profession, but to many among the nation's cultural elite. Made up almost entirely of an exclusive subset of wealthy English Canadians, the progenitors and keepers of the Movement were able to massage its aims to fit their own, the cultural dissemination and subsequent commodification of the Craft ideal that followed serving to spread – and thereby dilute – its many ideals among the masses. Thus, well before the editors of *Canadian Homes and Gardens* were able to jest at the expense of the philistine

foibles of the consumer public, much of the Movement's original essence and cultural currency had been spent. Indeed, it was not long into the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement's heyday that the first pattern book houses were published by Eaton's, sold by the dozens alongside reproduction, and in many cases, imitation, Morris wallpaper, Stickley furniture, and Tiffany lamps. Through the modern machinations of mechanical reproduction, a middle-class family could live fashionably and well, made comfortable by all of the latest accoutrements of twentieth-century domesticity, all within the auspices of an artistic movement that had been founded upon the principles of authenticity.

Though just beyond the time-frame of this dissertation, there remain a few final developments that provide a glimpse into the end stages of the original Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement, a brief discussion of which will serve to bring this study to a close. The first of these was the mail order kit home industry that took root in Canada and the United States during the early twentieth century. A booming growth industry upon its debut, the kit home business transformed the domestic side of the architectural profession, placing a far greater amount of power into the hands of the consumer. Conducted to the detriment of private architects and firms, the damage only compounded by way of mass-production and over-exposure, the advent of the kit home industry accelerated the decline of Movement's original idealism and artistic expression. The Movement was also affected by the Great Depression, just as it was by the passage of time, and shifting public, cultural attitudes and tastes in regards to style. While the global economy collapsed, and people everywhere faced financial ruin, it was only natural that the housing industry suffered in tandem. Furthermore, as the years wore on, and the last remnants of the early Canadian architectural profession faded away, a host of fresh young

talent with an enthusiastic appreciation for Modernism began to make major headway. Lastly, the legacy of the Arts and Crafts Movement, as will be explored again with respect to the immediate aftermath of its decline, will be considered alongside the myriad ways in which its spirit continued through the efforts of those who followed. Far from being a straightforward declension narrative, these examples will demonstrate that the Movement's modern-day expression, lying just below the surface of the heritage preservation efforts, craft fairs, and boutiques that continue to crop up today within many urban centres, has brought new life and possibilities to the modern Craft ideal.

Kit Homes

Folksily pasted into the jacket cover of a 1921 Aladdin Homes brochure, the faux-handwritten letter to "My Dear Friend" set the tone for the attempt to educate and ultimately sell the consumer on the benefits of prefabricated mail order kit homes, while offering a look at this year's models.[7] A clever bit of marketing, the letter introduces the company as a friend of the average homebuyer, and expends a great deal of effort on selling the brand's signature "Readi-Cut Idea" as a natural extension of traditional homebuilding, updated and simplified for the modern consumer:

> In building by the old methods you would probably buy your window and door frames made up – possibly you would have your main and basement stairs partly worked out – you would certainly buy your doors, columns, and newel posts finished, and would have all your mouldings run at the mill. THAT IS – you would buy these items readi-cut or partly so. The reason being – that a mill equipped with modern power-driven machines can do better work at lower cost than hand labor. Every bit of work that CAN be done by machines, SHOULD be so done.[8]

This excerpt is notable for the way in which the company attempted to integrate its innovative method of production into more traditional homebuilding practices. The term 'readi-cut' was incorporated directly into the ad copy, likening this new method of doing

[7] *Aladdin Homes: Made in Canada* (Toronto: Canadian Aladdin Co., 1921).
[8] Ibid, 8.

things to the old, which though similar to days' past, was once carried out by many more hands across several manufacturers. Through being in charge of every step involved in the creation of one of their patented houses, Aladdin successfully merged the assembly-line and department store models of mass-production. The excerpt's conclusion holds nothing back, affirming in bold capital letters, that the era of the craftsman was over.

Arriving in 1905, the kit home industry achieved instant commercial success, merging the well-established pattern book architectural tradition of the nineteenth-century, with the highly successful department store catalogue model of the early twentieth.[9] While pattern book architecture had originally benefited agrarian, rural customers, the mail order kit home, available by rail, and marketed via glossy catalogues and magazines, was able to capture the imagination of North America's newest addition, the suburbanite family in search of a new home. According to Richard Harris, the kit home industry expanded rapidly during the early twentieth century, growing to include Sears-Roebuck and Pacific Ready-Cut in the United States, and Aladdin Homes and Eaton's in Canada. With approximately 350,000-400,000 kits shipped by 1930, kit home sales were equivalent to up to 10% of all housing starts during their peak in the 1920s.[10]

Offering the dream of homeownership, combined with the promise of a modern, stylish, new home as seen between the pages of *Good Housekeeping*, or *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, and often willing to extend credit, the kit home industry was an unequivocal success. Leading to the purchase and construction of hundreds of thousands of new homes, the industry paved the way for the rise of the modern suburb.

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[9] Richard Harris, *Building a Market: The Rise of the Home Improvement Industry, 1914-1960* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 100.
[10] Ibid.

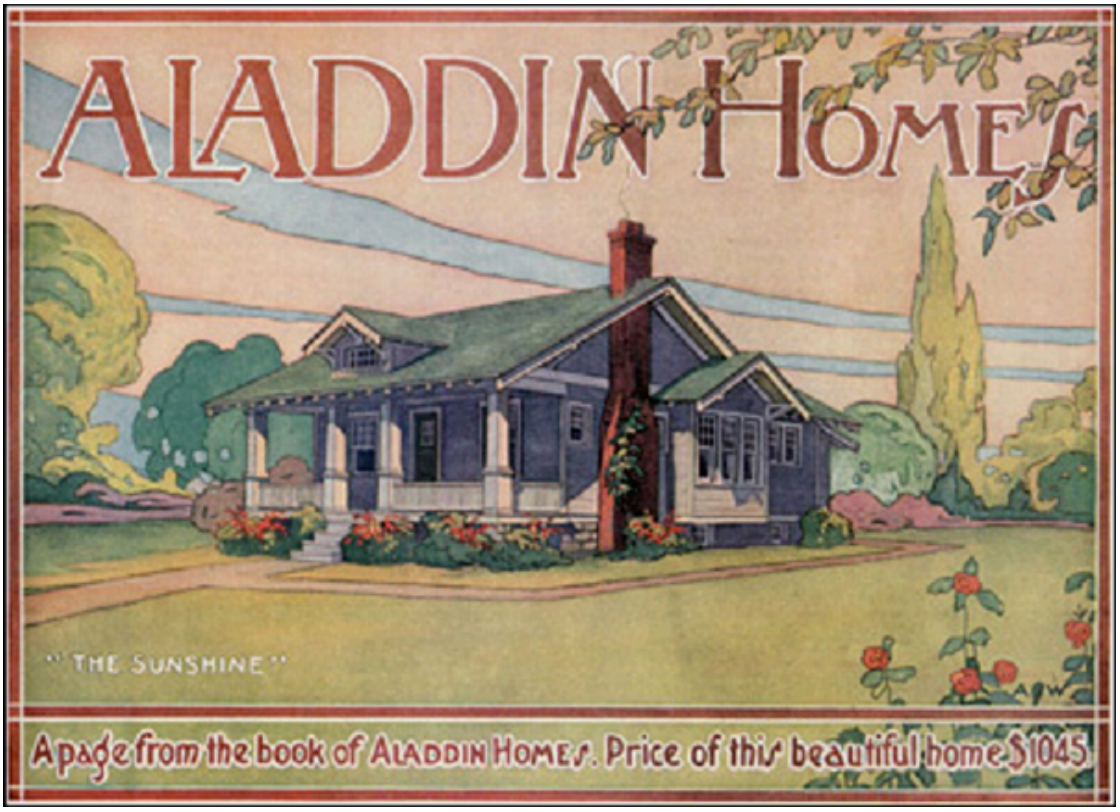

Figure 6.2 Aladdin Homes Catalogue [1921]. Popular across Canada and the United States, the kit home industry was able to tap into the consumer market for modern, suburban homes. Marketed along traditional lines, right down to the whimsical names, pleasing colour palettes, and use of natural materials, the spirit of the Arts and Crafts Movement was invoked, if in name only, in an effort to sell consumers what were little more than prefabricated, factory-assembled homes.

Most significantly, the market shift towards kit homes meant that for the first time, the housing business was being marketed and sold directly to the consumer. By sidestepping both the architectural profession and construction industry, as Harris suggests, the kit home industry introduced a great deal of genteel domesticity into a very technical, labour-intensive process.[11] Borrowing from the marketing techniques most commonly associated with print, the lines between editorials and ads were blurred in attempt to soft-sell products to a mostly middle-class, female-centric domestic market.[12]

[11] Ibid, 106.
[12] Ibid.

For companies such as Sears-Roebuck or Eaton's, this came quite naturally, since both already had a long history of commercial success through their nationally distributed mail order catalogues, while others firms, such as Aladdin Homes, quickly adapted. Placed alongside ads for cosmetics, shoes, and miracle tonics, homes and home construction quickly became a domestic product to be seen and purchased by the female consumer.

This new model of domestic consumption was contrary to how home purchasing had been conducted in the past, as prior to the twentieth century, the design and construction of homes had been almost exclusively a male-dominated process. Women may have been involved, but by and large, it was men who interacted with the architects, helped source materials, and provided input on key decisions. The rise of the male-centric Arts and Crafts Movement, as we have seen, witnessed an even further reduction of women's voices from the design process, the relative domestic femininity of the Victorian Era having been eclipsed by the turn of the century. Accordingly, it is ironic that the Movement's rapidly growing popularity would result, by way of the domestic consumerization of the housing industry, in the return of the female consumer.

In terms of the Arts and Crafts, the popularity of the kit home industry spelled the end for much of the Movement's original idealism, including craftsmanship, design, and individuality. What had begun as a backlash against mechanization, reproduction, and conformity, had through its own success, become everything its founders had passionately opposed. In essence, the Arts and Crafts Movement had come full circle. The notion that one would simply pick a home out of a catalogue, have it delivered pre-made, and then assembled by a team of unskilled labourers, without the involvement of an architect, would have been anathema to anyone who considered themselves a follower

of William Morris. It is thus telling, however, that no recorded words of admonition on the subject have remained from either Nobbs, Smith, or Maclure, whose practices continued well into the kit home era. While it is likely that they and others would have scoffed at the notion of being replaced by a catalogue, most of the early architects of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement spent the majority of their careers creating custom-designed homes far and away from the later suburban tract housing of the interwar period. Speaking often of the desire to improve the condition of art and architecture across Canada, there may have been comfort in the realization among the nation's artists, architects, and cultural producers, that something of their ideals and design sense had captured the attention of middle- and working-class consumers.

The Great Depression and the End of an Era

By the onset of the Great Depression, the Arts and Crafts Movement, even in its most vestigial commercial form, had begun to fade. Its cultural significance was diminished as much by changing consumer tastes, including the popularity of Art Deco, Bauhaus, and the International Style, as it was by the simple passage of time. While William Morris died in 1896; his British contemporaries, John Ruskin and Phillip Webb passed on in 1900 and 1915 respectively, their deaths occurring just as the Movement reached full stride. Across the Atlantic, American architect and editor of *The Craftsman*, Gustav Stickley, lived until 1942, having faced financial ruin and bankruptcy in 1915, his practice, furniture factory, and beloved paper ceasing production the following year.[13] Frank Lloyd Wright, whose Craftsman and Prairie Style homes dotted the American Mid-West from Buffalo through to Milwaukee, and west to the Pacific Coast, lived until 1959, the prolific American architect having long moved on from his Arts and Crafts roots.

[13] David M. Cathers, *Gustav Stickley* (Detroit: Phaidon, 2003).

In Canada, the Arts and Crafts Movement remained viable well past its British and American counterparts, continuing to command plenty of private and public commissions, especially from universities and government institutions, including libraries and museums, well into the 1930s. In British Columbia, Samuel Maclure retired after the First World War, dying in 1929,[14] followed by the retirement in 1920 of his one-time collaborator, Francis Rattenbury, who was murdered in 1935 by his much younger second wife's lover.[15] In Ontario, Eden Smith died at the age of ninety in 1949 at his son's farm in Guelph, having retired in 1925 after a long period of dwindling popularity.[16] Among Smith's contemporaries, Henry Sproatt and Ernest Rolph's partnership continued into the 1930s, their many works including the Neo-Gothic Hart House [1919], along with several other local landmarks such as the Royal York Hotel [1929] and Canada Life Building [1931], which both incorporated more modern Art Deco elements.[17] While Sproatt died in 1934, the firm continued under Henry's son Charles and Ernest Rolph until 1942, eventually moving into the hands of the younger Sproatt following Rolph's retirement, the latter to live well into his eighties, dying in 1958.[18] In Montreal, Percy Nobbs died in 1964 at age eighty-nine, surviving virtually all of his nineteenth-century contemporaries, and living well into the era of several new construction methods and architectural styles, up to and including Brutalism. Alive to witness the ravages of urban renewal, Nobbs saw the city he once knew disappear before

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[14] Janet Bingham, *Samuel Maclure: Architect* (Ganges: Horsdal & Schubart Publishers Ltd., 1985), 121.
[15] Daniel Francis, "Francis Mawson Rattenbury," *The Canadian Encyclopaedia*, March 23, 2013, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/francis-mawson-rattenbury-feature/
[16] W. Douglas Brown, *Eden Smith: Toronto's Arts and Crafts Architect* (Mississauga: W. Douglas Brown, 2003), 32-3.
[17] Andrea Kristof, "Sproatt and Rolph," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, February 7, 2006, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sproatt-and-rolph/
[18] Ibid.

his eyes.[19] While Nobbs' practice continued until the death of his partner George T. Hyde in 1944, it had been more than a decade since Nobbs had won any large commissions.[20] With landmarks including the Château Laurier [1912] in Ottawa, Union Station [1927] in Toronto, and the Holt Renfrew [1937] store in Montreal, the Montreal-based firm of George Ross and Robert MacDonald ended in 1944, following MacDonald's death in 1942, and Ross' in 1946.[21] By the end of the Depression, the first wave of Canadian architects had died out. The structures of their day, solid and built to last, served as monuments to a vision of Canada as it had been understood by a privileged few, hailing from a time when it was thought that the twentieth century would belong to Canada.

More quantifiably, from the First World War, through the Great Depression, and into the Second World War, the construction industry went through an acute shortage of skilled workers, resulting in the innovative substitution of traditional materials, such as wood, brick, and stone, for prefabricated replacements.[22] Part of what Anthony D. King refers to as a "quiet revolution in materials and construction,"[23] which had begun prior to the First World War, the building industry had to act quickly in order to keep up with demand. Thus, in many ways, the economic, commercial, and cultural conditions that allowed the kit home industry to flourish, were tied almost directly to the so-called "Bungalow Craze" of the early twentieth century. Owing to the innovations emerging from of the kit home model, the Arts and Crafts – though by now in name only – was

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[19] Susan Wagg, *Percy Erskine Nobbs: Architect, Artist, Craftsman* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982), 76-80.
[20] Ibid.
[21] David Rose and Geoffrey Simmins, "Ross & Macdonald," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, October 18, 2011, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/ross-macdonald/
[22] Anthony D. King, *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 164.
[23] Ibid.

able to enjoy a second act, as demonstrated by the popularity for prefabricated cottages and bungalows among middle- and working-class consumers.

From the 1930s onwards, the options for building a private home narrowed, with only the wealthy privy to the luxury of hiring an architect. Indeed, the extent to which the option to build new structures using traditional materials and methods became a limiting factor architecturally – with tradition increasingly equated with excess, and modernity with restraint – cannot be overstated. Within a generation, the Arts and Crafts, along with many other craft-centric styles, including even Art Deco, were being replaced by cheaper, plainer, less labour-intensive ones. Thus in short order, the aesthetic principles and ideals that were once viewed as progressive, were quickly repositioned as old-fashioned and conservative. Manifested en masse following the Second World War, the calls for urban renewal, and thus for cities everywhere to embrace the Modern Age and shake off the shackles of the past, were virtually unstoppable. It would be the task of later generations to take up the mantle of heritage preservation and the promotion of liveable cities.

Legacy

Outside of Toronto proper, perched on an impressive, forty-acre site overlooking Lake Ontario from atop the Scarborough Bluffs, The Guild Inn and Park represents the last major site of sustained activity for Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement. Following the purchase of the former Bickford Estate by Ontario heiress Rosa Breithaupt Hewetson, and her husband Spencer Clark, the couple founded the Guild of All Arts in 1932.[24] Centred around the former estate, which the Clarks expanded and converted to become a large, live-work studio and shop purpose-built for the benefit of local artists and

[24] Gary Miedema, "The Guild Inn," 2009, Reposted by Heritage Toronto within its *Building Storeys* series in 2010. Accessed May 14, 2016, http://heritagetoronto.org/the-guild-inn/

craftspeople, the Guild soon became a hub for creative activity and collaboration. Host over the years to resident artists such as, sculptor Frances Gage, composer Sir Ernest MacMillan, and latter-day Group of Seven member, A. J. Casson, along with many notable visitors including Canadian concert pianist Glenn Gould, British film and stage icon Sir Lawrence Olivier, and Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson,[25] the Guild was in many respects a loose counterpart to the Arts and Letters Club. Forced toward self-sufficiency during the Depression, the Guild's members struggled to sell enough of their wares to stay afloat, their cause aided by the food grown within its own gardens.[26]

Figure 6.3 Spencer and Rosa Clark [1932]. Founders of the Guild of All Arts, the Clarks' cultural contribution to the City of Toronto, and to the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement cannot be overstated. Courtesy the Guildwood Village Residents Association.

After a period of government requisition during the Second World War, the Clarks regained ownership of the Guild, which they expanded with the purchase of an additional five hundred acres of land, four hundred of which they sold off for suburban redevelopment. Thus was born a planned, architecturally distinct new neighbourhood known as Guildwood Village.[27] Meanwhile, at the original Guild site, the gardens became an architectural graveyard, with a statue garden created out of the architectural remnants of Toronto's past. At a time when countless landmarks were coming down

[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

during the urban renewal heyday of the 1950s and 60s, the Clarks purchased and hauled away the various columns, archways, and decorative statuary that had once adorned the city's stone-clad banks, office towers, and shopping arcades.[28] It was not long before the Guild had assumed a new identity of preservation and history, visitors able to take a stroll through the city's past while enjoying the fresh air and a splendid view of Lake Ontario.

Sold by the Clarks to the Toronto and Region Preservation Authority in 1978 for $8 million, the Guild Inn and Park became public lands. In 2014, a private company made a deal with the City, which had been struggling to operate the site for decades, to purchase, restore, and expand upon the dilapidated Guild Inn, with plans including a restaurant and special events space.[29] Set to live on as a site of public reverence and enjoyment, the Guild Inn and Park's legacy is two-fold. First and foremost, as one of Canada's only Depression-Era artists' colonies, the Guild of All Arts continued the work begun by the founders of Canada's Arts and Crafts Movement. Secondly, in terms of Guild Park's role as a site of historic preservation and public memory, the Clarks' foresight and vision has endured. Set amidst one of Toronto's most picturesque settings, there remains a distinct connection to the Arts and Crafts principles of building with nature, and of complete design, the Guild Inn and Park working effectively as a whole.

While the Guild of All Arts promoted an earlier generation's craft idealism, the creative enclave was a last holdout of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement as it had originally been conceived. Into the 1950s, 60s, and beyond, Canadian art and architecture quickly adapted to the various cultural shifts of the day. The various influences of

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Valerie Hauch, "Once Upon A City: Guild Inn an artists' muse that still inspires," *The Toronto Star*, May 6, 2016, https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2016/05/05/once-upon-a-city-guild-inn-an-artists-muse-that-still-inspires.html

Modernism by then familiar to Canadian painters, sculptors, composers, and architects, began to reshape Canadian cities as a host of urban renewal projects, many spurred on in anticipation of the 1967 Centennial, changed the face of urban Canada. Very little of the art and culture which had existed from the turn of the last century to the start of the Second World War escaped relegation to the same conservative characterisations that had once been the death knell for the cultural accoutrements of the Victorian Era. Thus, the traditional understanding of the Movement all but disappeared, pushed aside by a new generation of Modernist thinkers, writers, poets, painters, and architects, keen to move past what many among them perceived to be the stuffy ideals held by their forebears.

Despite this period of transition, the nationalist spirit of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement never completely vanished. Owing partly to the elevated sense of cultural self-consciousness promoted by the findings of the Massey Commission, as well as the quest for Canadian identity inspired by the 1967 Centennial, many were once again ready to ask what it meant to be "Canadian." Riding the tide of mid-century Canadiana, the work of the Danish-Canadian textile artist, designer, and craft activist, Thor Hansen [1903-1974], Art Director for the Canadian-owned, British-American Oil Company [B/A] from 1948 to 1968,[30] is a prime example of what can be considered Canada's Second Wave Arts and Crafts Movement. Hansen's distinctive use of recognizable Canadian motifs, adapted to commercial graphic design as an off-shoot of Modernist Pop-Art, exemplified a bold, new direction for Canadian art, craft, and design. During his twenty-year tenure at B/A, which was once Canada's fourth-largest oil company, with over nine thousand service stations and several refineries, Hansen revolutionized the company's public face through the implementation of his own brand of Canadiana-

[30] Rachel Gottlieb, *Thor Hansen: Crafting a Canadian Style* (Toronto: Textile Museum of Canada, 2005).

influenced graphic art, textiles, and collectible memorabilia.[31] Beginning with his corporate work, Hansen's murals, wall hangings, textiles, and furniture, highlighted the artist's affinity for bold, nature-inspired colour schemes, paired with simple, repeating motifs depicting Canada Geese, woodland scenes, and other natural settings particular to Canada. Before long, Hansen's iconic artwork was a fixture of every B/A office, his illustrative style to additionally adorn the walls of B/A's ubiquitous service stations, with small reproductions of his work available for purchase.

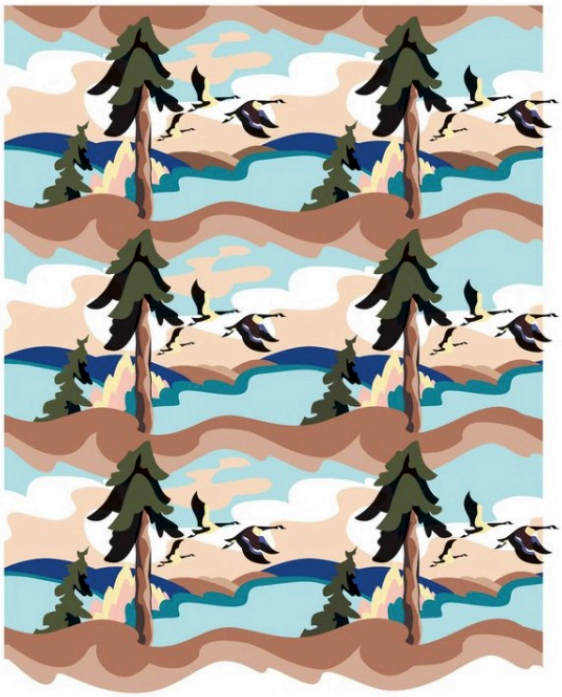

Figure 6.4 *Geese in Flight* [1950s] by Thor Hansen. One of the artist's most popular motifs, the influence of the Group of Seven can be clearly seen. Hansen's Modernist, Pop-Art take on classic Canadiana was created at a time when Canada was once again searching for a national identity through artistic expression. Courtesy the Canadian Textile Museum.

If not himself a household name by the 1950s and 60s, Hansen's colourful, B/A-branded road-maps and collectibles likely made their way into the backseats, scrapbooks, and collective consciousness of Baby Boom-Era Canadian families. Before his retirement in 1968, Hansen was central to B/A's creative direction and public image for Expo 67. Featured prominently on a cross-marketing campaign between B/A and Expo, once again

[31] Ibid.

in the form of collectible gas station souvenirs, Hansen's final contribution to B/A was to be among his greatest. Borrowing heavily from the nationalistic expressionism established by the Group of Seven, and by the call to nature associated with the Arts and Crafts, Hansen's stylized depictions of iconic Canadian flora and fauna, executed in his signature, Pop-Art style, helped establish a new direction for Canadian art and design. Bringing a far more playful, abstract character to modern Canadiana, Hansen's commercial graphic art made the medium much more accessible, something to be held, traded, and collected by people of all ages. Thus, long after B/A's cessation, Hansen's contribution to Canadian Pop-Art, especially within corporate design, cannot be ignored, his work having gone a long way towards the ongoing quest for a national artistic style.

More than a half-century past the historic civic battles fought by pioneering urbanists such as Jane Jacobs [1916-2006], Lewis Mumford [1895-1990], and Robert Moses [1888-1981], a new urbanism has arrived, one which echoes many of the same ideals of the early twentieth century. Although the initial idealism of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement has been dormant since the late 1930s, recent evidence points to a revival of certain of its original elements. Visible in the progressive civic push over the last few decades, to reclaim streets for people as opposed to cars, and to tear down the infrastructure of the mid-twentieth century in favour of new parks, cycle paths, and neighbourhoods, as in Boston, Chicago, and Toronto, the change has been swift. Furthermore, at a more grassroots, individual level, the rise of "Hipster" culture, defined loosely by a dedicated enthusiasm for all things unique, quirky, vintage, and handmade, and cultivated and promoted by trendsetting, city-dwelling "Millennials," has re-introduced a sort of latent craft idealism into the modern, urban experience.

In the realm of architecture, there has been a recent increase in the effort to build more consciously, to design homes, condos, office towers, and other structures with an eye towards the environment, including the use of sustainable materials and an efficient use of space. Similarly, there has been a recent trend towards heritage preservation and what has been labelled "adaptive re-use," whereby historic structures are integrated into new developments. Although the progenitors of the Craft Movement, with their preference for natural materials were more concerned with tradition, craftsmanship, and aesthetics more than anything resembling modern-day notions of sustainability, the spirit inherent in the desire to build with nature shares much common ground. Thus it follows that the Movement's founders, Morris included, would most likely have understood the rationale behind today's blended approach to architectural preservation. Whether through the innovative use of environmentally sound materials, or the efforts to preserve some or all of a given historic edifice, the leading edge of architectural thought today exhibits a handful of significant ties to the idealism set in motion by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Lastly, from a scholarly standpoint, it would appear that the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement is in the early stages of a cultural rediscovery. Beginning with the biographies of Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure, published between the 1970s and 2000s, it would appear that a renewed interest in this transformative cultural period in Canada's early twentieth-century history has begun to make a return. Furthering this nascent, Canadian Arts and Crafts renaissance, *The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections*, held at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1993, and supported by a publication,[32] went a long way towards reinvigorating public

[32] Katherine A. Lochnan, Douglas E. Schoenherr, and Carole Silver, eds., *The Earthly Paradise: Arts and Crafts By William Morris and His Circle From Canadian Collections* (Toronto: Key Porter Books Limited, 1993).

interest. In 2013, the National Gallery's *Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890-1918*, curated by Charles Hill, and backed by a publication,[33] spotlighted the creative contributions of Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure to Canada's cultural coming of age.

There and Back Again

This dissertation has been predicated upon three interconnected arguments. The first was that the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was a cultural phenomenon, similar but separate to its British and American counterparts, able to stand alone as an agent of change within the collective creative conscience of early twentieth-century Canada. Second, this study has demonstrated that the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was the product of a shared effort, primarily on behalf of English Canada's cultural elite – its artists, architects, and wealthy patrons – who in their private clubs and exclusive social circles, shaped the national dialogue on Canada's national art, architecture, and style. Thirdly, this dissertation has demonstrated, through archival research, interviews, and site visits, that there remains a small but vibrant Arts and Crafts legacy within Canada, to be found among the modern-day inhabitants of Arts and Crafts homes, as well as within new, strengthening trends towards heritage preservation, adaptive re-use, and civic pride. Taken together, these three lines of analysis illustrate a clear picture of the cultural impact of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement.

Beginning with the arrival of the Arts and Crafts Movement to Canada, placed within the context of its British and American counterparts, this dissertation has demonstrated the significant cultural role assumed by the Movement as it emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. Arriving just as the early professions were seeking

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[33] *Artists, Architects and Artisans: Canadian Art 1890-1918*, ed., Charles C. Hill (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 2013).

officialdom, protection, and public esteem, the nationalistic pride inherent to the Movement, especially the promise of a national architectural style built by and for Canadians, the Arts and Crafts appeared to be tailor-made for its adoptive, young host. Spearheaded by a small collection of architects – Eden Smith, Percy Nobbs, and Samuel Maclure among them – Canada's largest cities soon became fertile ground for the Movement's intertwining philosophies of art, craft, and design. Building upon the traditions of Great Britain and New France, and provided with ample natural inspiration and materials from the wilds of Northern Ontario and the rainforests of British Columbia, the progenitors of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement were able to forge a new Canadian architecture. Canadian by design, this new architectural style was one that would define both the culture and history of Canada, while simultaneously providing it with an architectural character and tradition of its own. Thus what began as a protest against what was internally deemed to have been a great national slight directed at the early Canadian architectural profession, the arrival and subsequent eager uptake of the Arts and Crafts resulted in the successful creation of a clear national style.

The second central theme of this dissertation has maintained that by far the most persistent force behind the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement was the small, but highly-influential collection of creative, English Canadian, urban elites who alongside their artistic peers, sought to promote, patronize, and produce a national style. Organizations such as the all-male Arts and Letters Club of Toronto, to which Eden Smith, Vincent Massey, and the Group of Seven were all members, became a crucible of creative output, its well-connected members responsible for the direction of Canadian art and architecture throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. Far from being

alone in their cause, the Arts and Letters Club was joined across the gender divide by both the mixed-company Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and the female-run, Canadian Handicrafts Guild, which each in their own way sought to return traditional craftwork to the purview and economic advantage of women. Similarly well-connected, the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, were able to take advantage of their exclusive memberships, many among them connected by membership, marriage, or both, to several other prestigious Canadian organizations.

Last but not least, the third pillar of this dissertation has been built upon the hypothesis that the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement retains a viable, living legacy. Explored from within the living rooms and parlours of Arts and Crafts homes in Toronto, Montreal, and Victoria, this dissertation included an examination of the oral history of the Movement from among its three largest concentrations of historic activity. From these encounters, it was evident that there remains within Canada what can be described as a living Arts and Crafts legacy, one which may be held up today as a learning tool for future architectural and urban developments. Restrained by the limitations often associated with oral history, it has been the aim of this study to frame and contextualize the gathered data as part of a larger discussion. Conducted thus in the more participatory, observational vein of Parr and Stevens, the fieldwork segment of this dissertation has presented its findings as fairly and honestly as possible, with an eye ever towards the main aim of telling the modern-day history of the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement from a contemporary cultural viewpoint.

Introduced in Chapter One through the realm of fantasy, sprung from the pages of a literary tradition capable of contextualizing the time and place from whence the Arts

and Crafts Movement began, this study shall now conclude with a return to Tolkien's Middle Earth. In Tolkien's descriptions of The Shire, the idyllic, countryside refuge of Bilbo, Frodo, and Sam, the Hobbits of Hobbiton live for the simple life, seeking, as the editor of *Canadian Homes and Gardens* once entreated of modern domesticity, to live in a way that was "comfortable, honest and unpretentious."[34] A proxy for Tolkien's childhood recollections of rural English life before the mechanized destruction of the First World War, which he witnessed firsthand at the Battle of the Somme, The Shire represents the same longing for peace, order, and tradition, grounded by an innate sense of satisfaction and familiar comfort in the old ways of doing things. Lacking the raw industriousness of the Dwarves, the intellectual curiosity of the Elves, and the ambition for power of Men, the Hobbits of The Shire are perfectly content to lead their lives as they see fit, to continue going on just as they always had before. Likely not lost to Tolkien's well-educated social circle, the author's favourable description of life in The Shire served to place him squarely within the realm of antimodernist thought, his rose-tinted view of life before the Great War aligning the famous author and philologist with fellow fantasy writers including William Morris.

With its Guild of Handicraft, Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, and its members' penchant for poetry, verse, and illuminated manuscripts, the Arts and Crafts Movement as begun by Morris was every bit as nostalgically antimodernist, medievalist, and fantasy-inspired as could be said for Tolkien's creation a generation later. While separated by the former's foundational craft traditionalism and lifelong quest for a purer connection to the realm of art, architecture, and material goods, there remained much more besides that linked these two great minds. Unsullied by

[34] J. Herbert Hodgins and Mary-Etta MacPherson, eds., *Canadian Homes and Gardens*, 48.

mechanization or the horrors of modern warfare, the imagined past of the Arts and Crafts' early devotees was held up as something to strive for, as a way forward amidst a fast-changing world that could be navigated, if only just, by first taking a careful step back. In the same vein, the Movement came to symbolize much of what had been a pre-occupying concern among English Canada's cultural and creative classes, with politicians, artists, architects, educators, and social commentators, desirous of establishing for Canada a national tradition of art, craft, and architecture. From the creative impulses of Smith, Nobbs, and Maclure, to that of the Group of Seven, and those of the OAA, the Arts and Letters Club, the Arts and Crafts Society of Canada, and the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, the forging of Canada's national style was a direct result of the nation's embrace of the values central to the Arts and Crafts Movement. Living on today as part of a legacy that reaches back to the late nineteenth century, the indomitable spirit of the Arts and Crafts remains a testament to the Movement's power to inspire. Hence with one last return to Tolkien's literary creation, to the world in which the essence of the Movement will live on indefinitely, we shall end our story, the Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement having travelled there and back again.

The Road goes ever on and on
Down from the door where it began.
Now far ahead the Road has gone,
And I must follow, if I can.[35]

[35] J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (London: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1954).

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